Buddhism and Transgression

The Appropriation of Buddhism in the Contemporary West

Adrian Konik



BRILL

Buddhism and Transgression

Numen Book Series

Studies in the History of Religions

Series Editors

Advisory Board

VOLUME 125

Buddhism and Transgression

The Appropriation of Buddhism in the Contemporary West

By

Adrian Konik

BRILL

LEIDEN • BOSTON
2009

Cover illustration: Pointing out possibilities in the flow (by Inge Konik, 2007).

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication-Data

Konik, Adrian.
Buddhism and transgression : the appropriation of Buddhism in the contemporary West / by Adrian Konik.
p. cm. — (Numen book series. Studies in the history of religions ; v. 125)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-17875-5 (hardback : alk. paper) 1. Buddhism—Western countries. 2. Buddhist philosophy. I. Title. II. Series.

BQ704.K66 2009
294.309182'1—dc22

2009026762

ISSN 0169-8834
ISBN 978 90 04 17875 5

PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

To Inge, for everything

CONTENTS

PART III

ENGAGING WITH THE DISCURSIVE LIMITS OF TRANSGRESSION

FOREWORD

This rich, challenging book by Adrian Konik invites the reader to enter reflectively into the process of the negotiation of religious meaning across often vast geographical, historical, socio-political and cultural divides. The point of entry of this book is an understanding of the discrepancy between the primary locus of discontent addressed by early Indian Buddhism, and the one addressed by contemporary Western Buddhism: the former suffered from the anxiety of an interminable series of rebirths; the latter, from the experience of being pressed into and shaped by the mold of power relations and thought patterns dominant in the West since the eighteenth century—as analyzed by Michel Foucault. Since the fundamental problems underlying early Indian Buddhism and contemporary Western Buddhism are not the same, the validity of applying the set of solutions developed by the first to the situation of the second becomes a question of great importance. Simply putting an end to rebirth would not necessarily strike the contemporary Westerner as the ultimate answer, as it certainly was for early Indian Buddhists. So, simplistic repetition, on the part of contemporary Western Buddhists, of any of the forms of historical Eastern Buddhism, or Hīnayāna (Theravāda) and Mahāyāna Buddhism, would amount to ahistoric Buddhist fundamentalism—in the terminology of the author, to mere nostalgia, Orientalism, and ornamentalism. The alternative would be to engage in the difficult process of conscious, reflective mediation and articulation. What would constitute the difference between a facile, superficial and ineffectual mediation of meaning, on the one hand, and a responsible, effectual one that is part of a larger intercultural dialogue, on the other hand? Adrian Konik makes a marked contribution to this field.

It is a delicate field of interlocking relationships which cannot be easily disentangled. No doubt, according to the early Indian Buddhist tradition, the Buddha's great discovery, as condensed in his experience of *nirvana*, involved his remembrance of his many former existences, presupposing as fact the reality of a never-ending process of rebirth as a source of deep anxiety, and an acceptance of the Buddha's overcoming of that fate as ultimate liberation. This was not an isolated item, but embedded in a nexus of great complexity and reciprocally implied in

other factors. The belief in rebirth was inextricably connected to the pan-Indian ontological axiom of *karma*; the philosophical rejection of all speculative philosophy (typical of the Buddha); the Buddha's unique ontology of impermanence, non-substantiality and causality; an intimate, subtle linkage of soteriology and cosmology reflecting the science and mathematics of the India of the day, but with links to the Europe of the time, entailing the existence of a circular world system with various assumptions concerning time, space, and so on; the socio-political stresses and strains between classes and genders, the social dominance of Brahmanism and the breakup of central political hegemony occurring at the time, among other things. Hence, the soteriological message of early Indian Buddhism was part of a whole package, promising exit from, among other things, extremely difficult social conditions. Touch any aspect and the whole web vibrates. Over many centuries, historical Eastern Buddhism came up with its own numerous changes of emphasis in philosophy and cosmology, adapting creatively to changing social and cultural conditions. Similarly, immense processes of translation and inventive interpretation and re-interpretation took place, over many generations, as the Buddha's message was spread from India to East Asia, China, Japan, Tibet, and other socio-cultural complexes of the East.

Fairly recently, it has extended to the West; the shaping of contemporary *Western* Buddhism is thus a historical process in the making as we read this book. The 'West' is not a cut and dried thing either—a stable scaffolding—but a constantly changing set of relations of all kinds, social and political and economic, cultural and philosophical and scientific. To more fully understand the development of contemporary Western Buddhism would require an unpacking of all of those variables as they occur in the West, along with a tracing of the real and possible connections with the historical Eastern Buddhist past, and an identification of viable growth-points and doomed dead-ends. In this book, Adrian Konik, on the basis of an acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, and with particular reference to popular 'Western' Vajrayāna Buddhist literature and socially engaged Buddhism, investigates *how* this process of appropriating Buddhism in the West proceeded in the past, and *how* it may proceed in the future. He opts, rightly so, for a piecemeal approach, and strongly critical of naïve, unreflective and half-reflective ways, he opts forcefully for a thoroughly self-conscious, philosophically informed process of critical appropriation.

Opting for such a procedure, one is of course up against a difficult task. Old India is a far cry from the contemporary West. So why would some people be fascinated by discovering or inventing a living link with that strange past, even to the point of wanting to be known as 'Buddhists'? There are probably as many motives as there are Western Buddhists. Yet all move in the tension between two poles, both necessary in a process such as this; obliterate one, and the fascination, and the process of negotiation as such, will break down. The very sense of the relevance of early Indian Buddhism (and historical Eastern Buddhism) depends on the tension between distance and proximity: between then and now, there and here, difference and similarity, them and us, transcendence and integration, being outsider and being insider, strangeness and familiarity. Let the tension become too taut, let difference become complete incomprehensibility, and the connection snaps altogether; let the tension become too slack, let similarity become identity, and interest fades. Clearly, many positions can be taken on such a continuum. Some individuals would—by dint of situation, temperament or taste—be drawn by the attraction of distance, the 'otherness;' others would emphasize the proximity, the virtual sameness. On the one hand, the risks associated with a sense of distance, minimally mediated with the here and now, could be naïve romanticism, ahistoricism and escapism. No doubt that is exactly what some contemporary Western Buddhists want; it 'works' for them. On the other hand, cross a certain line in the absorption of the distant into the here and now, and the result could be the dissipation of early Indian Buddhism and historical Eastern Buddhism as sources of fascination and stimulation; dialogue could become subjection. Clearly some concerns (such as old age, sickness and death) are of a perennial nature, connecting human beings across all ages. But even the experience of these would be woven into epochal socio-cultural and other textures, determining how they are experienced. For this reason, contemporary Western Buddhist meditation just cannot be a simple replication of historical Eastern Buddhist meditation. Consciously or unconsciously, learning is always a selective, adaptive process of acculturation. Let it be conscious, Adrian Konik argues forcefully.

In the process of self-conscious, critical Western theoretical reflection *on*, and *for the sake of*, the appropriation of Buddhism in the contemporary West, a variety of models have emerged over time. Whether it would want to term itself a 'Buddhist' undertaking or not, is not really the issue. In our day of the convergence of all historical, cultural and

religious streams in one public space, such 'appropriation' is the kind of thing to be done by all serious thinkers on religion and philosophy, 'Buddhist' by self-identification or association, or not. Such a dialogue, such an interrogation, needs to be historically well-informed, led by fairness and understanding as far as the intentionality of the various phases of Buddhism are concerned, critical, theoretically adequate, and progressive-constructive. The days of myopic self-enclosure in one sector of humanity are numbered. In any event, this process has been looked at from existentialist, Marxian and Jungian perspectives, to mention a few, and Friedrich Nietzsche, Alfred North Whitehead, and many other Western thinkers have been investigated from the point of view of their comparability with historical Eastern Buddhism. Linking up with authors such as Richard King, Jeremy Carrette, Donald Lopez, Robert Sharf and Bernard Faure, Adrian Konik develops with great clarity and erudition an exciting perspective on the basis of the discourse analysis of Michel Foucault, without making inordinate normative claims for this perspective.

Moving in the vanguard of an emerging new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, developing promising and fruitful perspectives on the interpretation of historical Eastern Buddhism and the development of contemporary Western Buddhism, and, specifically, with a potentially significant environmental impetus, this milestone publication by Adrian Konik deserves to be read carefully.

J. S. Krüger
Emeritus Professor, University of South Africa

PREFACE

In Arthur Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea*, one finds the rather tragic image of a lame midget who, seated upon the shoulders of a blind giant, tries desperately but with limited success to counsel the latter concerning obstacles in their path,[1] all of which constitutes an analogy for the perennial tension that exists within the mind between the intellect and the will. For many Westerners of the nineteenth century, this analogy served to introduce them to Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, and to the model of the mind that underpins the meditative practices of both traditions. However, the great irony of this is that, in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it has become an increasingly appropriate analogy *for* numerous forms of contemporary Buddhism, both in the West and in the East. This is because many of them have, for a considerable time now, under the impetus of 'tradition,' blundered forward blindly through a changing discursive terrain that is increasingly strewn with new obstacles and pressing problems.

Admittedly, in terms of the same analogy, there nevertheless still exist critical echelons within such forms of contemporary Buddhism, which, their diminutive stature notwithstanding, seek to draw attention to such obstacles and such problems, in the interest of negotiating with them and mitigating them, respectively. However, as Friedrich Nietzsche points out in aphorism 230 of his *Human, All-Too-Human*, because the words of critical thinkers lack the power of myopic actions performed under the auspices of long-standing tradition, they all too often lack the necessary strength to effectively redirect such actions.[2] Yet, just as it is in the blind giant's nature to blunder forward unheedingly, so too, the lame midget cannot *but* offer cautionary counsel, albeit in the form of the faintest critical whisper.

The whisper which is this book is based on a thesis completed for the degree of DLitt et Phil in Religious Studies, at the University of South Africa (UNISA), in May 2007. In this regard, the author is very

[1] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, vol. 2, trans. R. B. Haldane (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1964), 421.

[2] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All-Too-Human: Parts One and Two*, trans. Helen Zimmern and Paul V. Cohn (New York: Dover Publications, 2006), 126.

grateful to Brill for the opportunity to improve upon the argument of the original thesis, for the chance to elaborate more fully upon the haunting intuitions from which it sprang, and, ultimately, for the occasion to present its concerns to others. It is hoped that, at least in some small way, this book will contribute to a broad discussion through which the current reduction of Buddhism to the level of the ornament will be addressed, and from which a non-ornamental Buddhism will one day be able to emerge.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is rather pointless to pretend that one's academic writing belongs to a separate sphere of one's life, a sphere somehow detachable from the less eloquent preoccupations that for the most part characterize one's regular existence. This is because any attempt to do so, in the interest of parading such writing as the most truthful representation of what one *really* is, sooner or later emerges as little more than clumsy artifice, which even the most naïve reader eventually sees through. However, to take cognizance of this, to accept that such writing is not simply the consequence of critical engagement with highbrow books, and not merely the result of reserved and dignified collegial exchanges in the hallowed halls of academia, gives rise to a distinct problem. That is, if one admits that one's academic book is also necessarily a product of one's life, both outside of, and indeed well before, one's entrance into academia, then the onerous task of adequately acknowledging the many people who contributed to its birth emerges, simultaneously, as imperative yet utterly impossible to accomplish.

In the interest of steering clear of this impasse, many academic authors often take the road most traveled by, and follow the traditional acknowledgment of collegial assistance with brief expressions of gratitude to a few close friends and family members—safe in the knowledge that any inadvertent omissions will be sanctioned by a customary demand for succinctness in this regard. However, in addition to lending impetus to the illusion of academic writing as a separate sphere of one's life, such an approach concomitantly stands to diminish the insights into the actual conception, and process of gestation, of any book that broader acknowledgement might otherwise provide. This is, of course, not to suggest the need to write something tantamount to another book *of* acknowledgements, the endeavor of which, regardless of its length and thoroughness, would always be condemned to fail, in virtue of the same reasoning that precipitates it. Rather, it is only to advance the relative importance of illustrating, albeit in broad, brief brushstrokes, some of the chance meetings, connections, accidents, problems, kind words, assistance, and conversations of a non-academic nature that comprise part of the series of random events which eventually culminated in one's book. Arguably, through such acknowledgment, one's book is allowed to

emerge not only as the rational work of an academic who is concerned with addressing some specific crisis in the world. In addition, it is also allowed to emerge as the creative response of a non-academic who, over a period of many years, was ushered along by various events and allusions, in peristaltic fashion as it were, toward a growing awareness of such a crisis.

As such, to begin with, and because their respective direct influence on the current work remains salient and palpable, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the following people: To Emeritus Professor J. S. Krüger, of the University of South Africa, Pretoria, not only for his constant encouragement and generous advice during my doctoral studies, but also for both his critical suggestions concerning the current work, and the time and effort he invested in the writing of its foreword. To Professor D. P. Goosen, also of the University of South Africa, Pretoria, not only for his initial patience with me as I gathered my thoughts for my doctoral thesis, but also for his subsequent discussions with me concerning both Foucaultian theory and its political applications. To Professor Ernst Kotzé, of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, for his provision of key resources, for his enthusiastic support of this and other academic projects, and, ultimately, for his friendship. To Professor Peter Anderson, of Austin College, Texas, for reminding me so powerfully about the unavoidable reality of impermanence, and for suggesting, so long ago, that it is possible to imbricate one's academic pursuits with one's Buddhist practice. To Professor Malcolm Voyce, of Macquarie University, New South Wales, for providing unexpected yet much needed encouragement during the darkest days of the project, and for the uncanny timeliness of his wonderfully appropriate advice concerning the *Mulasarvastivada-Vinaya* and the *Dharmasastra*. And speaking of timeliness, to Professor Jeffery Bineham, of St. Cloud State University, Minnesota, for absolutely crucial strategic advice at the last possible moment, without which this book in its current form would in all likelihood not have been possible. Also, I would very much like to thank, on the one hand, Mr. Maarten Frieswijk, Assistant Editor of Religious Studies at Brill, for his outstanding professionalism during the preparation of my manuscript, and, on the other hand, the anonymous Brill reviewer of my manuscript, for his/her thorough appraisal of the work, penetrating insight into its argument, apposite suggestions for its improvement, and warmly supportive remarks.

In addition, and in a more general sense, deep thanks must also go to Rob Nairn, a chance meeting with whom, late in 1993, marked the

end of my erstwhile aesthetic orbit around Buddhist icons and images, and the beginning of my active involvement with Buddhist meditation and practice. In this regard, the first meditation retreat that I attended—under Nairn's guidance—left an indelible impression on my understanding of Buddhism. This was not only because, within the quiet space of the Bayly Street Kagyü center, meditation was characterized simply as a means of working creatively with the mind to dissolve those habits which otherwise predispose it to suffering. In addition, it was also because this refreshingly iconoclastic and eminently practical characterization of meditation, which I had previously construed as bound up with weighty tradition and esoteric insights, took place, ironically, within a shrine room that was meticulously arranged according to the dictates of such a tradition, and in a way that pointed unequivocally toward such insights. It is often the case that an initial experience of paradox can inspire a long-term creative response to address its inconsistencies, even after the extant remains of the paradox in question have long been demolished and forgotten. The Bayly Street Kagyü center is no more, and many of those who were associated with it are now gone; yet, I would hazard a guess that the current work, in its concomitant iconoclasm *and* commitment to interfacing with 'traditional' Buddhism, owes an immense debt to this historical space—albeit less to what was said within its walls, and more to what could not be said there at the time, and to what for a long time afterward remained unspoken.

As such, deep thanks must, of course, also go to Michael Van Breda, on whose property the Bayly Street Kagyü center was located, and who never drew any clear distinction between his home and the center, insofar as he left the former as wide open to the public as the latter. Indeed, through such openness, a social space was created within which the murmurings of the discontent that I have attempted to account for in the current work, first moved into conspicuousness for me. Admittedly, from such an elegiac description, the reader may presume that this occurred on balmy, moonlit evenings, via dignified and sincere conversations held on the porch after meditation practice, over tea and in the warm glow of citronella candles—but this was the rare exception rather than the rule. Instead, for the most part, such discontent emerged somewhat more brutally, both through the depression, confusion and anxiety of certain visitors to the center, and through the apparent inability of meditation to function as a panacea for such ills. All of this, in turn, hinted at the possibility that the source of the problem lay not so much within such meditators themselves, and more

within something greater than them, which not only encompassed them, but which also spoke through them. Unfortunately, though, for a long time, and because like so many others I too initially viewed Buddhism through a psychoanalytic lens, these intimations remained little more than a series of tenuous connections. Indeed, occasional investigations of such connections soon lost their appeal, insofar as they seemed to lead repeatedly and inexorably toward various Marxist critiques of capitalist society, all of which, against the backdrop of Chinese activity in Tibet, brought with them their own immense set of theoretical problems. However, the more I began to privilege Heidegger's writings over the works of Freud and Jung, the less tenuous the above connections seemed to be, and the more investigation of them seemed to lead toward a space *other* than the Marxist/capitalist arena. Indeed, a happy accident at this point in time was my rediscovery of Eugen Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery*, a copy of which I had happened upon much earlier, but which for some or other reason I had never finished reading and subsequently misplaced. Through reading this text as a product of its time, rather than for what it says about Buddhism, the above connections not only began to lose some of their tenuousness; in addition, as they became stronger, a pattern that they were beginning to form, and which I had not noticed before, also began to slip vaguely into view.

To be sure, though, this was in many respects often more disturbing than it was stabilizing, insofar as, while such a pattern hinted at a problem with my existing psychoanalytic approach to Buddhism, not being fully visible itself, it neither allowed for clarity on the issue nor presented a cogent alternative to such an approach—tied up as it was with a concept of *Being*, the nuances of which remained no less at odds with Buddhist philosophy than certain psychoanalytic notions. To make matters worse, an array of personal problems that occurred around this time, and which derived from both work and relationships, served only to compound my existing confusion, through their completely unwarranted (but nevertheless irresistible) tendency to dovetail with such confusion and warp it even further. For his kind words of encouragement and prudent advice during this most frustrating and perplexing of times, and for reminding me that things are never as deep and substantial as I imagine them to be, but rather far more simple and empty, I am forever indebted to Akong Rinpoche, Abbot of Samye Ling monastery, Eskdalemuir, Scotland. I am also deeply grateful to those many people, ranging from monks and nuns to devoted lay practitioners and day

visitors, both at the main Samye Ling center and at several of its satellite centers, who so openly and informally shared their particular life stories and perspectives on Buddhism with me. This is because, through listening carefully to their words less for the deep and substantial idiosyncratic meaning that I had previously imagined them to contain, and more for the simple and empty patterns of social thought which they reflected, I was slowly but surely introduced to the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity. Admittedly, though, both at the time and for several years afterward, I remained completely incapable of formulating it as I have done in the current work, not least because of my relatively limited knowledge of Foucault's work and my tendency to see in his writings more a reflection of Nietzsche than of Heidegger. Nevertheless, what began at Samye Ling was subsequently augmented significantly during the time that I spent in Taiwan, where, with the assistance of good friends and wonderful people, I was afforded many opportunities to visit various Pure Land/Chan and Vajrayāna Buddhist centers. In this regard, I am particularly grateful both to Gilles Shao and to Beatrice Chen, and indeed to members of their respective families, for providing a much needed support system for me during those years, and for their many unsolicited acts of deep kindness, which I recall to this day and which never ceases to humble me. Through listening carefully to the people I encountered at these various centers—including a good few Westerners—not only did the conceptual distinction between Asian Buddhists and Western Buddhists begin to emerge as clumsily anachronistic; in addition, possible reasons for the evident *similarity* of their ostensibly different approaches to Buddhism also began to surface as related, in a highly nuanced way, to the phenomena of globalization and development.

With this in mind (and with the last vestiges of Orientalism and nostalgia purged from my perspective of Buddhism), I began teaching at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, and, after various events, studying Foucault's works and including them piecemeal in my courses. It was in relation to several of these courses, which were somewhat loosely orientated around Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, *The Will to Knowledge* and *Madness and Civilization*, that I first began to understand the type of depression, confusion and anxiety which I had encountered so many years ago at the Bayly Street Kagyü center, not as unavoidable ontological phenomena, but rather as the historically contingent discursive *products* of disciplinary power, the

deployment of sexuality, and psychiatry, respectively. Moreover, the patterns of social thought reflected in the many conversations I had had at other Buddhist centers all seemed to indicate very strongly that the Bayly Street Kagyü center had not been a rare and distant anomaly characterized by excessive pathology, but rather a veritable microcosm of contemporary Western Buddhism. That is, the Bayly Street Kagyü center, despite the very limited nature of its domain, had been neither more nor less informed by the discursive dynamics of contemporary Western Buddhism; rather, and perhaps as a consequence of a concatenation of certain unfortunate circumstances, within its domain such dynamics had simply been rendered particularly acute and hence more conspicuous.

However, my adoption of this philosophical stance notwithstanding, the formulation of an effective means of addressing what I now understood to be the problem continued to elude me for a considerable amount of time, until, one evening, quite by chance, I happened upon an allusion to Eugen Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery* in Foucault's *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1981–1982*.[3] It is difficult to explain what happened next, not because it was in any way sublime or mystical, but because, on the contrary, it was so brutally simple and jarring; that is, the above allusion, rather than constituting the proverbial final piece of the puzzle, served to kick the leg of the table upon which all the pieces of the puzzle had lain haphazardly arranged and overlapping one another, in a way that shook them into a more or less intelligible pattern. To be sure, as Foucault indicates in "The Ethics of the Concern for the Self as a Practice of Freedom," the practices of the first/second century C.E. Hellenistic/Roman 'cultures of the self' do not constitute a model that can simply be lifted out of history, so to speak, and employed by contemporary subjects as a means of resisting disciplinary/bio-power.[4] However, in alluding, in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, to the parallels that exist between such practices and the practices of contemporary Zen Buddhism, arguably, Foucault not only opened the door to the possibility that contemporary forms of Buddhism might be able to function in a similar fashion to

[3] Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1981-1982*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 222, 227.

[4] Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern for the Self as a Practice of Freedom" (1984), in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954-1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2000), 294–295.

such ‘cultures of the self.’ In addition, he also opened the door to a consideration of both the degree to which this might be the case, and the extent of the transformation that would be required of Buddhism before it could do so effectively. In the following pages of the current work, I have sought to explore these issues. However, I have done so not only because of an academic interest in arriving at some tentative answers to the theoretical questions they pose, but also with a view to mitigating, in very practical terms, the unnecessary suffering that I have encountered in my own life and in the lives of others—suffering which derives both from a non-acknowledgment of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, and from the consequent absence of any strategy to facilitate a repositioning of subjectivity in relation to problematic discourses.

Admittedly, although one might, from the above narrative, gain the impression of the origin and development of this book as a process that entailed a relatively systematic progression, via a series of more or less consecutive steps, in retrospect, this was perhaps not entirely the case. Indeed, I am already tacitly aware of some chronological inconsistencies and thematic superimpositions in my account, all of which cast a shadow of ambiguity over its historical accuracy. Nevertheless, while my words may hide somewhat more than they reveal in this regard, my expressions of heartfelt gratitude to all the people mentioned above remain utterly unequivocal.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Tables

Figure

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DP Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Translated by Allan Sheridan. London: Penguin, 1991.

HS Foucault, Michel. *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: Volume One*. Translated by Robert Hurley. London: Penguin, 1998.

MC Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Mentor, 1967.

TTE Rampa, T. Lobsang. *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1957.

TWL Blofeld, John. *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*. London: Rider & Company, 1978.

WWC Govinda, Anagarika. *The Way of the White Cloud*s. Woodstock: The Overlook Press, 2005.

INTRODUCTION

The role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity is not something that Buddhist practitioners can continue to ignore. This is because the idea of a transcendental subject, *as* capable in the contemporary era as it was in fifth century B.C.E., of approximating *śūnyatā* through quiet meditation on the evanescence of greed, hatred and delusion, has been rendered null and void through the discursive developments of the latter half of the twentieth century. In short, these developments are the consequence of globalization,[1] and the process of Westernization that is indissociable from it,[2] which together have increasingly placed

[1] Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne, in *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*, provide a good definition of globalization when they characterize it as a process that has dramatically altered current conceptions of space and time. That is, on the one hand, in terms of space, globalization has not only thoroughly reorganized international relationships through integrating societies and cultures at both economic and political levels—in a manner that has significantly intensified and complicated their interactions with one another; in addition, it has also diminished space in the sense that telecommunication and transportation networks have effectively made the world smaller, through augmenting access to, and activity within, even the most (previously) remote domains. On the other hand, in terms of time, such access and activity have progressively introduced into such domains the rapidity of economic and information exchange that dominate within 'developed' countries, with the consequence that the passage of global time has not only been effectively sped up, but also looks set to accelerate even more in the future. Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne, *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment* (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2005), 20.

[2] With regard to this, Foucault argues in "Who are you, Professor Foucault?" that, in effect, Western access to and interest in Indian philosophy are primarily the consequence of the Westernization of the world, which has not only allowed for the importation of Indian philosophy to the West, but also for the mediation of such philosophy, in terms of which it has been shorn of many of its cultural dynamics that might otherwise have rendered it largely unpalatable to Westerners. Michel Foucault, "Who are you, Professor Foucault?" (1967), in *Religion and Culture*, ed. Jeremy Carrette (New York: Routledge, 1999), 90. Wolfgang Sachs, in *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in Environment and Development*, not only echoes Foucault on this point, but also elaborates upon how the recent rapidity of such Westernization is the direct consequence of the 1945 United Nations Charter. This is because, in terms of this Charter, the attainment of world peace was predicated on the global establishment of Anglo-American and Western European cultural hegemony, which, insofar as it was orientated around and thoroughly imbricated with industrial development and technological progress, was regarded as an evolutionary benchmark against which all other cultures could be evaluated, and toward which those that were found wanting could be guided. Wolfgang Sachs, *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in Environment and Development* (London: Zed Books, 1999), 96.

the global population in a position where subjectivity is constantly, and more intensely than ever before, informed by an array of protean discourses, the invasiveness and dynamism of which are quite simply overwhelming. As Wolfgang Sachs points out in *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in Environment and Development*, the surreptitious nature of this process makes it all the more effective, insofar as it rarely involves any overt negation of certain cultural practices and privileging of others, in a manner that would allow for the organization of resistance. Instead, it more often occurs rather silently, through the appearance of seemingly innocuous and ideologically neutral items of technology, which, within a short space of time, lead inexorably to the radical altering of the users' approach not only to space and time, but also to both the world and other people.[3] Arguably, through this process, there occurs the formation of subjectivity around what is tantamount to the conceptual substantialism of those modalities of power associated with technology—that is, as will be discussed in what follows, different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions. Although not explicitly formulated as any unified doctrine of substantialism, such technologies and assumptions nevertheless tacitly function in a manner akin to one. Indeed, through globalization and Westernization, there has occurred an exponential radicalization of such implicit substantialism, in a way that is so acute, ubiquitous, and invasive that it has arguably come to constitute a new pseudo-religion which is acquiesced to by default rather than by choice.

This is particularly problematic for Buddhism, for reasons that emerge quite clearly from a cursory overview of its development. That is, although Buddhism emerged around the fifth century B.C.E.,[4] as early as the fourth century B.C.E. two separate Buddhist schools had already arisen, namely the more conservative Sthaviras and the more liberal Mahāsānghikas. Each of these schools, in turn, underwent dynamic processes of multiple subdivision and partial amalgamation, all of which gave rise over several centuries to what are now known as

[3] Sachs, *Planet Dialectics*, 12–16.

[4] As Maurice Walshe admits in the introduction and explanatory notes to his translation of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, although it is very possible that the Buddha lived and taught some time between 563 and 483 B.C.E., a later dating from about 480 to 400 B.C.E. has also been suggested by some modern scholars. Maurice Walshe, introduction to *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, trans. Maurice Walshe (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 19, 533.

'traditional' forms of Hīnayāna (Theravāda) and Mahāyāna Buddhism. As J. S. Krüger points out in *Turning-points in Buddhist Mysticism and Philosophy*, one of the most important differences between these two 'traditional' schools derived from the way in which the latter, on account of its progressive orientation, no longer advanced entrance into the monastic community as a prerequisite for attaining enlightenment, but rather opened up the possibility of this mystical experience to the laity. Philosophically speaking, this was largely the product of their dissolution, from the first century B.C.E. onward, of the lingering conceptual substantialism of Hīnayāna (Theravāda) Abhidhamma, which reached its apogee in the subsequent radicalization of *śūnyatā*, or the concept of emptiness, within the second/third century C.E. Mādhyamika philosophy of Nāgārjuna.[5] That is, as Bhikkhu Bodhi explains in his guide to the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, from a Hīnayāna (Theravāda) perspective, two realities exist, namely the conventional reality (*sammuti*) conditioned by the five aggregates of material form, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness, and the ultimate reality (*paramattha*) of the five aggregates themselves.[6] In contrast, as Krüger indicates, in terms of the above mentioned Mādhyamika radicalization of *śūnyatā*, even these ultimate realities were emptied of any intrinsic nature, as is neatly illustrated in the later short and very well-known *Heart Sutra*, where even the emptiness of the Four Noble Truths is thematized.[7] In effect, the socio-cultural consequence of this radicalization of *śūnyatā* was that it became theoretically possible for anyone to experience the sublime emptiness of enlightenment, at any time and place, regardless of their occupation or lack of monastic training. Through this, Mahāyāna Buddhism, over the next two millennia, continued to emerge as an ever more dynamic and nuanced religio-philosophic practice within an increasingly wide array of contexts.

---

[5] J. S. Krüger, *Turning-points in Buddhist Mysticism and Philosophy* (Pretoria: Aurora Press, 2007), 52, 57–61.

[6] *Abhidhammattha Sangaha: A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*, ed. Bhikkhu Bodhi (Onalaska: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 2000), 25–26.

[7] Krüger, *Turning-points in Buddhist Mysticism and Philosophy*, 64–65, 76. As Krüger explains in *Buddhism: From the Buddha to Asoka*, the Four Noble Truths, which constitute the foundation of the Buddha's teaching, comprise of the truth of non-satisfactoriness (*dukkha*), the truth of the cause of non-satisfactoriness (*samudāya*), the truth of the cessation of non-satisfactoriness (*nirodha*), and the truth of the path toward the cessation of non-satisfactoriness (*magga*). J. S. Krüger, *Buddhism: From the Buddha to Asoka* (Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1995), 81–88.

However, as discussed, from the middle of the twentieth century, this process has been progressively undermined through globalization and Westernization. This has occurred through powerful changes to the discursive circumstances of the laity, involving the exponential radicalization of an implicit substantialism, in the form of the respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies, which accompany the influx of technology under the auspices of development. Thus, although contemporary Buddhist practitioners around the world may continue to profess an ardent devotion to Buddhism, from a discursive point of view that takes into consideration such implicit substantialism, they are all, for the most part, primarily globally orientated Western subjects, and only Buddhist at a secondary level. Understandably, this is immensely problematic for Buddhism, because wherever Buddhist practices unwittingly allow the idea of *śūnyatā* to be underpinned by such implicit substantialism, the ultimate deference to the authority of the latter renders such Buddhist practices ornamental,[8] and the theoretical distinction between 'traditional' Hīnayāna (Theravāda) and Mahāyāna Buddhism rather meaningless.

Admittedly, although increasingly evident from the middle of the twentieth century onward, the above process has its origins in the late nineteenth century negotiation between the West and the East on the issues of Buddhism and science, in terms of which, while the Buddhism of the East became an object of fascination for the West,

[8] Susan Faludi, in her work *Stiffed: The Betrayal of Modern Man*, advances that ornamental culture emerged soon after the Second World War, and by the end of the 1950s had not only begun to dominate society and inform mainstream culture, but had also become a tenuous issue around which a great deal of socio-cultural commentary was orientated. In short, ornamental culture can be defined in terms of its move away from a focus on utility, and the production of things, toward a focus on the image, and the production of signs. Susan Faludi, *Stiffed: The Betrayal of Modern Man* (London: Vintage, 2000), 451. Similarly, what is being argued in the current work is that when the Buddhist idea of *śūnyatā* becomes underpinned by an implicit substantialism—in the form of the respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies—Buddhist practice loses its utilitarian aspect, which is bound up with the primacy of both the pursuit of, and the gradual realization of, *śūnyatā*. This is because, insofar as such a pursuit becomes secondary to the demands of the above implicit substantialism, Buddhist practice becomes orientated around the 'production of signs' of devotion that no longer communicate into the gradual realization of *śūnyatā*, because such realization is effectively prevented by the demands of the above implicit substantialism. In short, where this is the case, Buddhism becomes ornamental rather than utilitarian in orientation.

the science of the West became an object of fascination for the East. However, upon closer inspection, what emerges into conspicuousness is that such negotiation involved less a process of creative hybridity, and more the increasing co-option of the Buddhism of the East by the science of the West. That is, while the initial skepticism of 'traditional' Buddhists regarding the claims of science rapidly gave way to their infatuation with science, to the point where they even began to appeal to the authority of science to validate certain Buddhist tenets and to invalidate others, growing interest on the part of Westerners in Buddhism was only facilitated by their reductive transformation of both the Buddha into a scientist and Buddhism into a science, which required the negation of many of the cultural facets of Buddhism upon which its continuation as a living tradition depended.[9]

---

[9] As will no doubt be noticed, this perspective stands in marked contrast to the more optimistic perspective on the matter articulated by David McMahan in *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*. In short, although McMahan admits that contemporary Buddhism will, in all likelihood, soon be obliged to contend with the problem of what he terms global folk Buddhism—which involves a commodification of Buddhism that concomitantly rarefies its theories and practices in order to imbricate them with popular culture and the mass media—for the most part, he does not impute the ornamental features of global folk Buddhism to the rest of Buddhist modernism. Rather, for McMahan, global folk Buddhism, at least for the moment, remains a marginal, superficial and confused form of Buddhism characterized by pastiche and simulacra, to which Buddhist modernism will at some point have to respond, because of the imperialistic tendency on the part of global folk Buddhism to co-opt and reduce to a commodity everything that it touches. Thus, in contrast to global folk Buddhism, McMahan implicitly advances Buddhist modernism not only as the creative result of a largely successful process of hybridity between 'traditional' Buddhism and the discourses of modernity, but also as the type of Buddhism that is consequently most suited to function as the vanguard of this particular religio-philosophic practice, as it proceeds through the uncertain and shifting discursive terrain of post-modernity. David L. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 18–19, 21, 23, 261–263. However, what is being argued in the current work is that such optimism concerning the above process of hybridity, although immensely seductive on account of its largely positive nature, is also, at least to some extent, the product of discursive myopia. This is because, as discussed above, although some negotiation between Buddhism and the discourses of modernity does appear to have taken place from the late nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century, toward the end of this period, and certainly subsequent to this period, this dynamic of negotiation has been progressively supplanted by an unwitting superimposition of Buddhism upon the implicit substantialism of modernist discourses—namely, the respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies—along with a growing tendency on the part of Buddhists to quietly defer to the authority of such implicit substantialism. The effect of this, in turn, has been the progressive ornamentalization of contemporary Buddhism, both in the West and in the East.

Many of the dynamics of this exchange, along with their subtle yet important consequences, are neatly traced and elaborated upon in Donald Lopez's *Buddhism and Science: A Guide for the Perplexed*, and a brief thematization of some of them would be very helpful at this point. Possibly because it involved the most acute form of negotiation, namely a public debate, Lopez takes as his point of departure the occasion on which the Protestant Reverend David Da Silva and the Buddhist monk Gunānanda confronted each other in Pānadurē, Sri Lanka, in 1873, for the express purpose of criticizing the validity of each other's religio-philosophic position.[10] In this regard, what Lopez advances as particularly significant is the manner in which Gunānanda, in response to Da Silva's criticism of pre-modern Buddhist cosmology, problematized the validity of the modern scientific framework underpinning Da Silva's perspectives, both because of its relatively juvenile status and because of the way in which it was comprised largely of discordant, and indeed competing, views and opinions.[11] That is, apart from the specific statements and accusations made by the two adversaries during the course of the debate, what is arguably important is the manner in which Gunānanda's above mentioned response indicates less a resistance to modern science that is based on blind fundamentalism, and more a deep incredulity toward modern scientific claims that is couched in philosophical reflection.

Yet, as Lopez explains, in the years that followed, this incredulity steadily gave way to a growing belief among certain Asian Buddhist authors in the relative compatibility between Buddhism and science. That is, while, under the tutelage of Colonel Henry Steel Olcott, Anagārika Dharmapāla emerged as an advocate of such attunement at the World's Parliament of Religions in 1893, the Japanese Zen priest Shaku Sōen and the Chinese monk Taixu, among others, in various ways and to various degrees, either valorized Buddhism *as* science or valorized science for its capacity to confirm the validity of Buddhist doctrine. Admittedly, on the one hand, these developments cannot be construed as devoid of any negotiation because, despite their growing infatuation with science, the above mentioned authors did not explicitly embrace science as an alternative to Buddhism. Rather, on the contrary, while

---

[10] Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Buddhism and Science: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 39–40.

[11] Ibid., 55–56.

they skillfully sought to extend the influence of Buddhism around the globe on the basis of its new status as a scientific religion, they were also often careful to describe the limits of science whenever it threatened to usurp the authority of Buddhism. This much is neatly evinced by Taixu's declaration that, while it may be possible for the Buddha's insights to be endorsed retrospectively through scientific experiments, one can neither hope to arrive instantly at such insights, nor progressively pursue the attainment of such insights, through the study and practice of science alone.[12] Similarly, in addition to their own attempts at negotiating the relationship between Buddhism and science, these authors themselves constituted important points of contention within a broader framework of negotiation, namely one that included the Buddhist organizations within their respective homelands, with which they differed considerably on a variety of issues.[13] However, on the other hand, from the arguments advanced by these authors, it is quite clear that, at a certain level, the discursive developments of which their writings formed part involved less open negotiation between the Buddhism of the East and the science of the West, and more the covert co-option of the former by the latter. This is because the new stance adopted by these authors mirrored the colonial economy, insofar as the Buddha who was reflected in their writings was less the traditional Buddha of the canonical texts, and more a new Buddha who had been distilled from such texts by Europeans, and who was in the process of being sold back to Asians as the real or authentic Buddha who had hitherto remained hidden from their view within such canonical texts.[14] In effect, through this process, this new Buddha was not only shorn of the cultural accretions detested by Europeans as the dross that supposedly hid the original, pure, and essential Buddhism of their scholarly imaginations. In addition, he was also infused with all the socio-cultural iconoclasm and philosophical rationalism of the Enlightenment period, which made the alignment of his teachings with science all the more simple, effortless and seductive.

Subsequently, though, the discursive impetus behind such co-option gradually dissolved the above mentioned dynamic of negotiation between Buddhism and science, especially when emphasis shifted

[12] Ibid., 11–21.
[13] Ibid., 28.
[14] Ibid., 10.

from an intellectual engagement with the abstract theories of science to the experience of awe generated through their practical application in technology. That is, just as any empowering dialogue suffers when one party becomes mesmerized by the other, so too, what there was of negotiation between Buddhism and science began to dissolve the more Asian Buddhists became spellbound by the technological wonders of modern science. In this regard, Lopez draws particular attention to the writings of the Tibetan Buddhist monk Gendun Chopel, in which such amazement often usurps the unspoken protocol that called for the curbing of one's enthusiasm—a protocol predicated on the prejudice that modern science could only ever (re-)produce what the Buddha had already known about.[15] In short, what is perhaps most telling in Chopel's writings is the way in which, under the spell of such technological wonders, he moves progressively away from the cautious doctrinal stance of the likes of Taixu, mentioned above, toward an increasing deference to science as arbiter to settle problematic questions about the continued validity of certain Buddhist tenets; in particular, the Buddhist view of the earth as flat, which derives from the traditional Mount Meru cosmology.[16] Admittedly, whenever science ruled against the Buddha's teachings, Chopel refrained from openly declaring the Buddha's fallibility, and maintained instead that the Buddha's omniscience had led him to couch his teachings in the mythologies most intelligible

[15] Ibid., 127–128.

[16] As Lopez recalls in *Buddhism and Science*, although Buddhism inherited the concept of Mount Meru as the center of the universe from ancient Indian cosmology, it also inflected it in particular ways by surrounding Meru with ocean and four main continents, and by placing the hell realms and the realms of the hungry ghosts under the southern continent, the animal realm in the ocean and on the continents, the human realm on all four continents, the realm of the *asuras* on the lower slopes of Mount Meru and the *deva* realms of desire, form and formlessness on the upper slopes and summit of, and above, Mount Meru. Understandably, the spatial arrangement of this cosmology lends itself quite easily to an account of an 'original fall,' so to speak, in terms of which human beings emerge as the products of temptation. That is, accordingly, at one point in time, certain *devas* developed a taste for the substance that once covered the earth, the consumption of which imbued their bodies with matter that both robbed them of their erstwhile ethereal nature and necessitated their development of organs for excretion—organs which were subsequently utilized for sexual intercourse in a way that further compounded their desire. From this, there occurred the formation of humans plagued by desire, hatred and ignorance. Lopez, *Buddhism and Science*, 42–45. As such, against the backdrop of this process, Buddhist ethical and meditative practice emerges as part of an endeavor not only to reverse such degeneration, or such an 'original fall,' but also to ensure that it never occurs again; that is, the attainment of enlightenment dissolves the possibility of ever again succumbing to such a cyclical procedure.

to his students, rather than in concepts that were foreign to them but objectively true from the perspective of twentieth century science.[17] However, this approximation of iconoclasm appears to have set the stage for what was tantamount to a later *coup de grâce*; that is, although the iconoclastic step of declaring the Buddha's fallibility in relation to the shape of the earth would not be taken for some time, when it was eventually taken, its ramifications were augmented immensely by the fact that it was perpetrated by none other than the fourteenth Dalai Lama himself. Admittedly, the Dalai Lama only made this declaration against the backdrop of the understanding that the evidence of such error neither negated the validity of the Four Noble Truths, nor even led to any questioning of their veracity.[18] However, as Lopez goes on to point out, notwithstanding all remonstrations to the contrary, the adoption of such a position seriously destabilizes Buddhism, insofar as any concession by Buddhists regarding the Buddha's fallibility amounts to a potential point of erosion through which the entire edifice of Buddhism can eventually slip away into oblivion.[19] Indeed, this is all the more so when it involves a non-Buddhist discourse (in this case science) progressively pronouncing on what should and should no longer constitute Buddhist tenets. In this regard, arguably, the rather deleterious knock-on effect of the Dalai Lama's above declaration is neatly illustrated in his assertion, around the same time, in *The Power of Buddhism*, of both the ultimate authority of science to one day pronounce on the validity of the Buddha's teaching on rebirth, and the subsequent obligation on the part of all Buddhists to adjust their understanding and practice of Buddhism accordingly.[20]

Admittedly, on the one hand, this assertion by the Dalai Lama is perhaps less radical than it at first appears, because one can scarcely imagine how empirically based science might set about proving or disproving rebirth, the greater processes of which, by definition, do not occur within the empirical realm, and the lesser processes of which involve a spontaneous moment of creativity followed inexorably by a sudden dead end, before and beyond which, respectively, science cannot proceed. However, on the other hand, the Dalai Lama's above

[17] Ibid., 61.
[18] Ibid., 63.
[19] Ibid., 64.
[20] Tenzin Gyatso and Jean-Claude Carrière, *The Power of Buddhism* (Dublin: Newleaf, 1996), 206.

assertion concerning the overarching authority of science as arbiter remains immensely significant, because it not only implies the ideological neutrality of science, but also suggests the ideological neutrality of its practical application in technology. As already discussed, the latter in particular is very problematic because, on the contrary, the introduction of items of technology lead rapidly and inevitably to the radical altering of the users' approach not only to space and time, but also to both the world and other people. As such, through responding in this way to the processes of globalization and Westernization that have occurred from the middle of the twentieth century onward, the Dalai Lama, along with many other Buddhist authors, have unwittingly sanctioned the exponential radicalization of an implicit substantialism, in the form of the respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies, which accompany the influx of technology under the auspices of development. Moreover, arguably, through doing so, they have also inadvertently contributed to the ornamentalization of Buddhism, because wherever the idea of *śūnyatā* becomes underpinned by such implicit substantialism, the ultimate deference to the authority of the latter renders Buddhist practice ornamental.

Naturally, this has also significantly altered the relationship between contemporary Western Buddhism, or, in other words, the relatively recent efforts to appropriate Buddhism in the contemporary West, and such 'traditional' Buddhism.[21] This is because the specter of ornamentalism that has always haunted the former, on account of the primary constitution of Western subjectivity around the respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies, now torments the latter to more or less the same degree. However, the irony of this situation notwithstanding, contemporary Western Buddhism, particularly those forms that gravitate

[21] Although no reference to the African context is made here, this is not to suggest that Buddhism does not exist as a religio-philosophic practice within this domain; rather, this omission derives only from the fact that no new major forms of Buddhism have to date emerged from Africa. Indeed, for the most part, at present, Buddhism remains limited within this domain to pockets of either 'traditional' Buddhism or contemporary Western Buddhism, each of which are affiliated in various ways to larger organizations in the East and in the West, respectively. As such, because these pockets of Buddhism in Africa, on account of globalization and the process of Westernization that has been concomitant with it, share much the same fate as the 'traditional' Buddhism of the East and the contemporary Western Buddhism of Europe and America, in what follows they will not be considered apart from their 'host' organizations in the East and in the West.

toward socially engaged Buddhism, may yet prove capable of yielding valuable insights into the path that 'traditional' Buddhism will have to traverse to escape the discursive impasse in which it now finds itself. Arguably, this is because, unlike 'traditional' Buddhism, contemporary Western Buddhism did not constitute a response to the experience of transmigration as unbearable. Rather, it constituted a response to the negative experience of precisely those different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions that, from the middle of the twentieth century onward, have increasingly rendered 'traditional' Buddhism ornamental in orientation. As such, in coming to terms with its underlying motivation, and in restructuring its meditative practices accordingly, a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism may well provide a model for 'traditional' Buddhism that can help it to navigate a course into the future that steers clear of the maelstrom of ornamentalism.

On account of the significance of the above issue, it would, perhaps, be timely at this point to elaborate upon some of its more prominent dynamics. That is, as Basham points out in "Hinduism," while approximately a thousand years before the era of the Buddha, the Indus civilization was usurped by the culture of the *Ārya*, who invaded from the North-West, it was only after many centuries, as Āryan culture expanded east toward modern Bengal, that new doctrines of inexorable cyclical transmigration emerged through the influence of the peoples of the Ganges plain. Through this, the practice of the orthodox religions of the period became problematized, and the pursuit of a means of exiting the interminable cycle of death and rebirth became the object of an intensive and widespread religio-philosophic search.[22] In the Buddha's case, the answer to this problem rested with the doctrine of 'no soul'/'no self' or *anattā*. In short, as Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi explain in their introduction to the *Anguttara Nikāya*, the Buddha presented the doctrine of *anattā* as the only antidote to such an otherwise perpetual dynamic, in terms of which the notion of an immortal soul/enduring self is rejected as merely the product of an erroneous view of the five aggregates,[23] mentioned earlier. In contrast, although many Westerners have, in recent years, become familiar

[22] A. L. Basham, "Hinduism," in *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Living Faiths*, ed. R. C. Zaehner (Oxford: Helicon, 1988), 218–221.

[23] Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi, introduction II to *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: An Anthology of Suttas from the Anguttara Nikāya*, eds. Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 1999), 27.

with the concept of reincarnation/rebirth, especially in the wake of the counterculture of the late 1960s, the concept of transmigration has, arguably, never received any widespread social sanction within the West, insofar as it has been neither embraced on a large scale as a religio-philosophic tenet, nor included as a consistent thematic element within Western cultural production. As such, unlike the practitioners of both 'early' and 'traditional' Buddhism, it is virtually inconceivable that any contemporary Western Buddhists were ever initially drawn toward adopting Buddhism as a religio-philosophic practice through their experience of any doctrine of transmigration as 'unbearable.' On the contrary, the emergence of an array of rather unorthodox, but nevertheless highly creative, Western interpretations of the concept of reincarnation/rebirth, all bear testimony to concerted and diligent efforts, on the part of devout individuals, to facilitate a thorough integration of what they experience as a problematic concept into their discursive frames of reference. Understandably, a weighty irony is indissociable from such efforts, insofar as, in contrast, the practitioners of 'early' and 'traditional' Buddhism were not faced with the task of contriving, via a series of such discursive gymnastics, a belief in reincarnation/rebirth. Rather, they were more often unable to imagine a discursive framework in which transmigration did *not* feature in some or other way.

Nevertheless, there is significant evidence to suggest that Buddhism constitutes one of the fastest growing religions in the West, which begs the question as to the nature of the benefit that Westerners believe they will obtain from their practice of Buddhist meditation. A possible tentative answer to this question is hinted at in Anagarika Govinda's *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, when the author advances the immense capacity of Buddhist meditation to facilitate the restoration of humankind.[24] That is, it is plausible that, in many cases, the marginalization, on the part of Western Buddhists, of contentious questions concerning the problematic relationship between the Buddhist concept of transmigration and their meditation practice, is the consequence of the way in which Westerners' interest in Buddhism has always been primarily motivated by a concern over the 'decay' of Western *man*, in the interest of facilitating *his* 'restoration.'[25] Yet, although this goes some

---

[24] Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (London: Century, 1987), 166.

[25] From the outset, it should be noted that in the current work, the concept of *man* is not regarded as designating any timeless 'human essence;' on the contrary, as will be discussed in Chapter Three, in the light of Foucault's *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, *man* is regarded as a relatively recent discursive

way toward answering the above question, unfortunately, it in turn begs another question, namely one that concerns the reasons for the prevailing notion that Western *man* has fallen into 'decay.' The answer to this is obviously crucial because, in order for Buddhism to function as an effective antidote to such 'decay,' the nature of the 'dis-ease' that plagues Western *man* must necessarily be identified. Nevertheless, ironically, this vital question has, for the most part, either been glossed over or responded to glibly with an array of anti-Enlightenment, anti-scientific and/or anti-industrial platitudes. To a large extent, these platitudes bear the trace of romanticism in their largely unqualified valorization of the *human spirit*, and in their concomitant denigration of technological developments, urbanization, bureaucratization, etcetera, on account of the way in which the latter have, ostensibly, crushed and drained the life out of the former.

In effect, in Chapters One, Two and Three of this book, an endeavor is made to address this issue, in the interest of laying the groundwork for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism that can come to terms with its underlying motivation and restructure its meditative practices accordingly. That is, in a manner which is in no way normative,[26] in these chapters the theoretical perspectives of Michel Foucault, as reflected in his archaeological/genealogical analyses and in his later work on subjectivity,[27] are utilized to draw into

construct that emerged within, and in relation to, the nineteenth century discourses of Life, Labor and Language.

[26] Although the argument of this book takes as its point of departure the validity of both Foucault's archaeological/genealogical analyses and his later work on subjectivity, this use of Foucault's theoretical perspectives should not be construed as underpinned by an exclusive valorization of their superiority over all other social theory. This is because this book constitutes part of a general endeavor to couch the appropriation of Buddhism in the contemporary West within critical theoretical perspectives, or, in other words, perspectives that both take into account discursive developments within the context of Western society, and that identify possible discursive problems in relation to such developments that can be engaged with. In short, the primary issue at stake is the facilitation of the emergence of non-ornamental Buddhism; that is, Buddhism which, with the aid of apposite theoretical perspectives, situates itself within the discursive terrain of *whatever* era it finds itself in, and maintains that contact irrespective of the manifold discursive changes that may subsequently transpire.

[27] Arguably, Foucault's theoretical perspectives are particularly well suited to facilitating such a proposed discursive reorientation of Buddhism, because of the way in which, as Uta Liebmann Schaub points out in her article "Foucault's Oriental Subtext," they are at least partially informed by Buddhist philosophy, which affords them the option of gravitating around the empty center of *śūnyatā*; that is, a center empty of all except the potential to become anything. Uta Liebmann Schaub, "Foucault's Oriental Subtext," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 104/3 (1989): 309.

conspicuousness some possible reasons for the prevailing notion that Western *man* has fallen prey to 'decay.' In short, in order to account for the emergence of such a notion, the dialogue that exists between Foucault's major works, and which is seldom spoken of, is focused on in the interest of thematizing what is said, within its parameters, about the tension that pervades the contemporary discursive terrain. With regard to this, it will be advanced that this tension derives not only from the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies that simultaneously advance conflicting concepts of autonomy, but also from the concomitant incongruity between the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions, all of which, in effect, constitutes contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict.[28]

Following on from this, while Chapter Four involves an overview of the various phases of the discursive apparatus that has mediated Western involvement with Tibet, Chapters Five to Seven are orientated around a consideration of literature that exhibits a negative response, on the part of contemporary Western subjects, to the above mentioned increasingly acute discursive tension of both their society and the form of subjectivity constituted in relation to it. That is, Chapter Four involves, among other things, a discussion of how the above mentioned discontent manifested itself in Westerners' growing interest in domains and discursive practices outside of their immediate environment (such as Tibet and Vajrayāna Buddhism), which they believed to be devoid of such discursive tension. On account of this, the early literature of contemporary 'Western' Vajrayāna Buddhism is arguably of particular value, as it presents an intricately detailed and highly imaginative discursive tapestry, the threads of which, upon closer examination, betray many of the dynamics to which much of contemporary Western interest in the broad spectrum of Buddhism is a response. In turn, on the basis of this rationale, in Chapters Five, Six and Seven, respectively, Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*, John

[28] This is, of course, neither to assert that subjectivity has never been constituted as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict at any other time in history, nor to suggest that no cultural baggage from before the eighteenth century contributed to the constitution of subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict in and after the eighteenth century. Rather, the conscious self-limitation of the current work to an investigation of disciplinary/bio-power discourses, is predicated on the understanding that these discourses have played a more prominent role in the formation of *contemporary* subjectivity than any other more distantly historical discourses.

Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*, and Anagarika Govinda's autobiographical *The Way of the White Clouds*, will be explored. In short, on the one hand, this exploration will entail a thematization of the different ways in which, and the different degrees to which, each of these texts constitutes a negative response to the various manifestations of what Foucault terms disciplinary/bio-power in the West. That is, firstly, the regimentation of space and time, secondly, the process of intensified individualization through the dossier, thirdly, the augmentation of panoptical surveillance, fourthly, the deployment of sexuality, and fifthly, the proliferation of secularized/medicalized confession, along with the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of each. On the other hand, this exploration will also entail a consideration of the extent to which successful discursive acts of transgression against disciplinary/bio-power were carried out through each of these texts, and the extent to which such endeavors were unsuccessful.

Following on from this, in Chapter Eight, the discursive legacy of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda, as it manifests itself in the work of Robert Thurman and Rob Nairn, will be considered. In particular, attention will be given to Nairn's criticisms of the work of his literary predecessors, his different approach to meditation, and the limitations that plague his approach. After this, it will be advanced that such limitations derive from his failure to acknowledge the role of disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the formation of subjectivity. Admittedly, to some extent, socially engaged Buddhism does approximate a possible way in which to overcome such limitations; however, in other respects, it is similarly hampered in this regard in virtue of its tendency to focus primarily on broad politico-economic dynamics, rather than on the disciplinary/bio-power discourses which covertly underpin such dynamics. As such, in the interest of overcoming such limitations, an exploration of the strategy, nuances and general focus of socially engaged Buddhism will be succeeded by an examination of the way in which these three aspects of it leave disciplinary/bio-power discourses free to inform subjectivity around tendencies that are completely inimical to meditation. After this, with reference to, among other texts, Richard King's *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'the Mystic East,'* Jeremy Carrette and Richard King's *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion*, Donald Lopez's *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*, and relevant articles by Robert Sharf, a four-fold strategy for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western

Buddhism, capable of overcoming such limitations, will be proposed. On the one hand, despite the Foucaultian orientation of this proposed four-fold strategy, it nevertheless stands to resonate with certain aspects of the agendas of some socialist organizations, most notably, aspects of the environmentalist agenda of the 'social greens.' As such, in the interest of facilitating an articulation of these different struggles, such resonance will be explored at this point. However, on the other hand, for a number of reasons, a partial dissonance also exists between the proposed four-fold strategy and certain aspects of other social strategies, such as those which derive from the anarcho-syndicalist tradition; in this regard, the work of the Buddhist scholar and social theorist David Loy constitutes a good example. As such, and because any articulation of struggles must necessarily avoid an unwitting reduction of one to the other, the chapter will close with a few remarks upon the differences between these strategies.

Finally, in the conclusion of this book, and with reference to the works of Bernard Faure, the need to concomitantly 'de-familiarize' disciplinary/bio-power and 'de-mystify' Buddhism in the West, in order to render contemporary Western Buddhism politically efficacious, will be considered. After this, the need for an inverse of this process, that is, a 'de-mystification' of disciplinary/bio-power and a 'de-familiarization' of Buddhism, within the context of 'traditional' Buddhism, will be reflected upon, and some tentative suggestions will be made through which 'traditional' Buddhism may, perhaps, at some point in the future, be able to develop similar political efficacy.

PART I

THE EMERGENCE OF DISCIPLINARY/BIO-POWER AND THE ARISING OF DISCURSIVE TENSION IN WESTERN SOCIETY

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM OF EFFECTIVE CRITIQUE

As mentioned in the introduction, because the doctrine of transmigration has never received significant socio-cultural sanction in the West, for the most part, Buddhism has not been embraced by Westerners because of the way in which it affords them an opportunity to escape from an otherwise burdensome cycle of endless rebirth. Rather, at least according to Govinda's *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, Buddhism is important for the West because of the immense capacity of Buddhist meditation to facilitate the restoration of humankind.[1] At first glance, Michel Foucault's concepts of disciplinary power and bio-power, or, for the sake of brevity, disciplinary/bio-power, appears to provide a cogent answer to the otherwise troubling question of the reason *for* Western *man's* 'decay' to the point where such 'restoration' has become necessary.

The term 'disciplinary power' was coined and entered into circulation after the publication of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, and it rapidly became the blanket descriptor for the multiplicity of social transformations that occurred in the early part of the eighteenth century. In turn, in *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: Volume One*, Foucault expanded on the above through what he referred to as 'bio-power,' which he maintains emerged in the latter part of the eighteenth century. In short, according to Foucault, disciplinary power and bio-power involve a series of proliferating technologies that are, respectively, orientated around, on the one hand, the regimentation and surveillance of the movements of the *individual* body within time and space, in the interest of rendering it ever more useful and docile, and, on the other hand, the regulation and supervision of the activities of the *population*, deemed necessary for its survival.[2] However, in various of his writings, such as in *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1975–1976*, Foucault emphasizes that bio-power should not

[1] Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, 166.

[2] Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: Volume One*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1998), 139.

be regarded as something separate from disciplinary power, because as bio-power emerged, it concomitantly imbricated itself with existing disciplinary technologies and subtly inflected them in various ways, such that its entrenchment as an irreversible feature of the discursive terrain augmented, rather than countered or diminished, disciplinary power.[3] To sum up, then, on the one hand, Foucault advances in *Discipline and Punish* that, since the *early* eighteenth century, and through a series of detailed stratagems that sought to meticulously manipulate all of its aspects, the human body has increasingly been subjugated through processes of power that not only analyze its movements, but which also both synthesize ever more intricate movements, and then demand that the body execute these new movements with the utmost precision and accuracy.[4] On the other hand, as he advances in *The Will to Knowledge*, since the *late* eighteenth century, there has emerged a new focus on the same human body as the center of the biological processes of the human species; this, in turn, has resulted in the amalgamation of politics and biology, insofar as this new focus has been indissociable from the proliferation of a new political obsession with controlling, regulating and directing such biological processes, in accordance with certain normative principles (*HS*, 142).

However, unfortunately, despite appearances, these issues do not satisfactorily identify the specific *causes* of the ostensible 'decay' of Western *man*, from which *he* needs to be saved through any process of 'restoration.' This is because, although Foucault, via the various analyses discussed above, provides a cogent argument for the nature of the discursive changes that occurred during and after the eighteenth century, he does not advance that they were *negative* changes. Rather, he only maintains that they were different in orientation from what had previously existed. Admittedly, in this regard, his above genealogical forms of analyses do constitute an advance of sorts on his earlier archaeological analyses. That is, in terms of his earlier archaeological approach, Foucault, in *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, asserted that he was interested in the rules which underpinned particular inflections within certain discursive configurations, and which, after gaining momentum at a multiplicity of levels,

[3] Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1975–1976*, trans. David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003), 242.
[4] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Allan Sheridan (London: Penguin, 1991), 135–138.

allowed the statements made within the era in question to differ from what had previously been said. As such, in terms of archaeology, the unpredictable (yet retrospectively traceable) emergence of these rules that the statements of a given era obey, constitutes the key feature that ushers in new eras and, conversely, differentiates them from previous periods.[5] In this regard, as Foucault explains in "On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle," the archaeological approach is thus predicated on the possibility of arriving at the limited number of rules—often palpable in particular statements made within certain discursive configurations—which, albeit implicitly, subsequently sanction the production of an infinite number of other statements within a given era, in a manner that lends to them a distinctive tenor.[6] In this way, the archaeological project can be distinguished from other forms of analysis, in that it does not concern itself with any vague, latent meaning that supposedly lingers beneath the manifest content of what is said, but rather tries to understand how whatever is said constitutes the necessary product of certain discursive rules, which have thoroughly determined both its orientation and its relationship with the other statements of its time.[7] That is, as Foucault illustrates in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, from this perspective, any given statement made by any individual at any one time is far less the result of their idiosyncratic manipulation of language, and far more the product of particular discursive rules. This is because, even though the individual in question may be incapable of identifying or formulating them, these discursive rules define both the parameters and the relational conditions of the enunciative field in which all of the statements that he/she can ever possibly make are ultimately condemned to operate.[8] Thus, from an archaeological perspective, power is not considered capable of shaping discourse in an arbitrary fashion.

However, subsequently, in "Truth and Power," for example, Foucault not only admitted that the shortcoming of the archaeological project was its failure to take into consideration the ways in which the exercise

---

[5] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 2003), 236.

[6] Michel Foucault, "On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle" (1968), in *Aesthetics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2000), 306.

[7] Ibid., 307.

[8] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), 111.

of power, at the level of discursive regimes, could influence both the nature of statements and their relationship with one another, along with, for that matter, the dimensions of the above mentioned enunciative field.[9] In addition, in "The Confession of the Flesh," among other texts, he also rearticulated his stance as orientated around the formulation of an analytical grid, so to speak, through and in terms of which the relational groupings of power—understood as something immanent in every social domain, rather than as something emanating from one point in any social domain—could be engaged with critically in terms of their genealogical constitution.[10] However, because genealogical analysis can thus be understood as the result of including power as a variable in the archaeological project, as Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow argue in *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, one cannot really divide Foucault's work up in terms of these approaches.[11] Indeed, with regard to this, they maintain that Foucault himself, in his 1970 inaugural lecture at the Collège de France, advanced a highly complementary relationship between the two methods.[12]

What is also of importance in this inaugural lecture is the way in which, despite the focus of genealogical analysis on relational groupings of power, which at first glance appears to be a matter of the utmost gravity and urgency, Foucault emphasizes the lightheartedness with which such analyses are undertaken.[13] This, in effect, neatly serves to draw attention to the way in which Foucault's later genealogical orientation never involved any negative evaluation of discursive formations, disciplinary or otherwise, for being the arbitrary products of the play of power. That is, the above mentioned lightheartedness of genealogical analysis turns out to be almost obligatory because, having revealed all discursive formations and shifts to be the arbitrary products of the play of power, one has little basis for positing the superior value of one discourse over another. An off-shoot of this, in turn, is that any general

---

[9] Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power" (1977), in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2002), 114–115.

[10] Michel Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh" (1977), in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 198–199.

[11] Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 104.

[12] Ibid., 105.

[13] Michel Foucault, "The Discourse on Language" (1970), in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 105.

endeavor to account for the 'decay' of Western *man* by attributing it to the constant extension of the parameters of disciplinary/bio-power, would, ironically, be precluded from utilizing Foucault's genealogical analyses of the arising of disciplinary/bio-power technologies to support its claims.[14] In other words, although such forms of analyses bring into conspicuousness the ways in which disciplinary/bio-power has informed subjectivity around *new* discursive dynamics, because genealogy, as a methodological approach, is little more evaluative than archaeology, such forms of analyses do not provide sufficient reasons for rejecting such discursive dynamics. This is, of course, not to say that one *never* has a reason for engaging with what one perceives to be problematic discursive practices, but rather that because of the lightheartedness of genealogy, contestation is only really justifiable in the face of the most extreme forms of suffering that arise in relation to excessively restrictive discursive economies. Two examples of such economies are the conditions in French prisons in the middle of the previous century, and the legislation which, around the same time, sought to restrict sexual practices, both of which Foucault readily criticized.[15]

---

[14] With regard to this, Gary Gutting, in his introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, advances that, like the writings of so many French intellectuals before him, Foucault's work appears to target the norms and morality of bourgeois society in the interest of characterizing them as insidious and bigoted. Gary Gutting, introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, 2d ed., ed. Gary Gutting (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 21. However, although this remains the overriding *impression* that most readers get from Foucault's work, it *remains* nothing more than an impression; that is, Foucault rarely makes the evaluative leap which so many readers unhesitatingly make on his behalf. Consequently, if such an impression were allowed to constitute the basis of social criticism, it would, to a significant extent, rob such criticism of its cogency.

[15] As James Miller recalls in *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, in 1971 Foucault launched the *Groupe d'Information sur les Prisons* (GIP) in an effort to thematize the horrendous conditions within French penitentiaries. However, even in the face of such lamentable oppression, and such a restrictive discursive economy, GIP maintained that it was not their ambition to propose any specific reformative measures, and asserted instead that their primary objective was simply to draw the reality of prison conditions into blatant conspicuousness, and to keep the public continuously aware of it. James Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 187–189. As such, while their political engagement with prison conditions never strayed too far from the genealogical project, Foucault himself exhibited similar caution, some fifteen years later, in his explanation in "What Is Called 'Punishing'?" of his reasons for writing *Discipline and Punish*. Michel Foucault, "What Is Called 'Punishing'?" (1984), in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2002), 383. Admittedly, though, Foucault's subsequent activism in relation to alternative sexual practices, at least to some extent, breached the purely descriptive horizon of genealogy; these ranged from relatively modest defenses of the rights of

However, notwithstanding the parallels between the technologies of disciplinary power found within prisons and those at work within society at large, which will be discussed in the following chapter, one would be hard pressed to argue that the suffering experienced by all contemporary civilians is in any way comparable to the suffering experienced by inmates within the French prison system. Similarly, one would be equally hard pressed to argue that all contemporary civilians have, as a consequence of the technologies of bio-power, suffered in a manner akin to so-called homosexuals. As such, Foucault's highly specific forms of activism cannot readily be co-opted into any general criticism of disciplinary/bio-power that seeks, out of hand, to attribute to it culpability for the 'decay' of Western *man*. That is, although such criticism could use Foucault's genealogical analyses to bring into conspicuousness the arbitrariness of the origins of disciplinary/bio-power technologies that have otherwise erroneously been accepted as necessary, such criticism would not thereby automatically acquire a significant reason for considering them to be a *cause* of suffering. Similarly, such criticism would not thereby automatically find justification for rejecting disciplinary/bio-power discursive frameworks in favor of a 'pre-disciplinary' discursive terrain, in which power was no less immanent and in which discursive formations were no less arbitrary in origin.

However, from *The Hermeneutics of the Subject* through to the second and third volumes of *The History of Sexuality*, namely *The Use of Pleasure* and *The Care of the Self*, the focus of Foucault's work entered a different phase. In this regard, Foucault, in the introduction to *The Use of Pleasure*, maintains that this work concerns the ways in which individuals previously produced their own subjectivity, so to speak, through engaging in various practices of the self, in contrast to *Discipline and Punish* and *The Will to Knowledge*, which concerned the ways in which subjectivity is produced by discursive regimes.[16] Arguably, this ushered in the possibility of regarding disciplinary/bio-power, albeit inadvertently, as responsible for the creation of a unique form of suf-

---

homosexuals in "Sexual Choice, Sexual Act," to vehement valorizations, in "Sex, Power, and the Politics of Identity," of the new dimensions of pleasure opened up by sadomasochism. Michel Foucault, "Sexual Choice, Sexual Act" (1983), in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2000), 144; and Michel Foucault, "Sex, Power, and the Politics of Identity" (1984), in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2000), 165.

[16] Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: Volume Two*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 1992), 4–6.

fering, involving the constitution of subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict. In short, this possibility emerged because this shift in focus was not simply another dimension of Foucault's work, but rather the beginning of a new perspective on all of his previous work;[17] a perspective in terms of which the *experience* of subjectivity, in relation to the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, became a valid avenue of investigation.[18] The degree to which this is the case becomes evident when one juxtaposes aspects of Foucault's genealogical approach with aspects of his above mentioned later approach. That is, as Foucault explains in *Discipline and Punish*, in terms of genealogical analysis, any technology, or indeed any founding assumption, is only important because of the way in which it constitutes a handhold for power; as such, in relation to this concern, the arbitrary meanings with which such technologies or assumptions are imbued remain largely inconsequential (*DP*, 140).[19] However, in contrast, Foucault's later shift

---

[17] In effect, Foucault asserts as much in "The Subject and Power" when he retrospectively characterizes the previous twenty years of his work as orientated not around the analysis of power, but rather around the exploration of the formation of subjectivity. Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power" (1982), in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2002), 326.

[18] The echo of Heidegger in Foucault's later work is unmistakable, Foucault's relative silence over this issue notwithstanding. As such, Foucault's response, during an interview in 1978, to questions concerning his intellectual formation, during which he briefly admits to the partial influence of Heidegger, should perhaps be imbued with considerable significance as both a tacit acknowledgment, on the part of Foucault, of his debt to Heidegger, and a surreptitious adumbration of the direction that his later work on subjectivity would take. Michel Foucault, "About the Concept of the Dangerous Individual" (1978), in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2002), 257. In this regard, see also Michel Foucault, "Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault" (1982), in *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, eds. Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton (Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 12–13; and Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 189.

[19] In other words, as Foucault maintains in *Discipline and Punish*, the primary object of focus in genealogical analysis is the way in which such assumptions or technologies function strategically as part of a network of power (*DP*, 139). For example, he advances that one should regard disciplinary changes in the organization of the school, hospital, army and workshop not as the result of the ostensible 'fact' that production in the eighteenth century became more intensive and centralized than ever before, but rather as a consequence of the emergence of such assumptions concerning the forces of production, which, subsequently, provided a convenient source of validation for the instantiation of disciplinary power (*DP*, 141–142). Similarly, in relation to the medical technologies of supervision at the French military port of Rochefort, Foucault advances that they were not implemented in order to remedy and eliminate its hazardous mixture of illness and illegality, but were rather sanctioned because

in focus toward the experience of subjectivity ushered in the possibility of evaluating a discursive framework in terms of the congruity between the meanings of its different technologies and their respective implicit founding assumptions, because of the way in which their incongruity with one another would constitute a form of subjectivity underpinned by perpetual discursive conflict.

Admittedly, at first glance, disciplinary/bio-power society does not seem to be plagued by any such incongruity. Rather, on the contrary, as already discussed, there appears to be an immense complementarity between disciplinary technologies and bio-power technologies, as evinced by the capacity of the latter to merge faultlessly into and simultaneously modify the former. However, a more circumspect approach reveals this to be only one side of the coin. This is because, as will be discussed in what follows, on the one hand, disciplinary technologies along with *certain* bio-power technologies, are orientated around the concept of the individual as a rational and autonomous being, who is obliged to exercise more rational autonomy than ever before in relation to the industrial, social and administrative developments of the eighteenth century. However, on the other hand, *other* bio-power technologies, since the eighteenth century, have increasingly advanced the notion that the individual is incapable of exercising rational autonomy in perpetuity. Moreover, in each case, these conflicting technologies continue to be underpinned by different implicit founding assumptions, the *divergent* transcendent orientations of which compound the above mentioned incongruity exponentially. That is, while disciplinary technologies defer to an elusive future that can by definition never be arrived at, and while certain bio-power technologies, namely those associated with what Foucault terms the deployment of sexuality, defer to an elusive truth/power of sex, other bio-power technologies, namely those associated with what may be termed secularized/medicalized confession, defer to an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth. These transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions are particularly problematic because of the way in which they severely handicap any critical remedial endeavors. The reason for this is that, while the above mentioned conflicting disciplinary/bio-power technologies can, at least to some extent, be engaged with critically and opposed, their

---

power found within such a chaotic milieu of exchange a source of justification for its perpetual extension (*DP*, 144).

respective founding assumptions, precisely because of their implicit nature, remain largely unnoticed. This, together with their ostensible transcendent authority, lends to such assumptions an immense capacity to inform subjectivity. In this regard, it is perhaps important to recall that, already in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault maintained that it is crucial to engage critically with the manner in which thought (at least since Plato) has tended to remain mesmerized by transcendence. This is because, through such mesmerization, various teleologies have been proposed at various times, each of which, in different ways and to different degrees, has involved an attempt to limit the horizon of possibility, by mapping history in a particular way in order to support a particular *telos*. In turn, in each case, it has then usually been advanced that some or other lost or forgotten origin can ostensibly be rediscovered, provided that the formation of subjectivity around certain principles is engendered or allowed to occur.[20]

Of course, when such teleologies are recognized for the dreams that they are, and allowed to remain as poetry within the domain of symposia, there is little harm. However, when their fictional nature is forgotten, and when they are no longer lightheartedly proposed but rather earnestly prescribed as normative, then they become immensely problematic. Indeed, as alluded to above, and as will be discussed in what follows, this is all the more so when, in competition with one another, they unwittingly constitute a form of subjectivity that they simultaneously tear apart.

---

[20] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 223–224.

CHAPTER TWO

DISCIPLINARY/BIO-POWER AND RATIONAL AUTONOMY

The French Revolution is, for the most part, construed as one of the most significant socio-political events in history, on account of the way in which it drew to a close the era of monarchic rule and concomitantly ushered in the age of democracy. As such, it is generally regarded as a largely positive development that stands both as a testimony to the triumph of the human spirit over oppression, and as the historical birth moment of the ethical concerns from which contemporary humanitarianism evolved. As such, it is no surprise that, in the interest of propagating this narrative of 'progress,' the bloodletting that was indissociable from the French Revolution is often played down, either by characterizing it as an unfortunate but necessary evil, or by intimating its relative acceptability in comparison to the mass slaughter of twentieth century conflicts.

However, what Foucault thematizes in *Discipline and Punish*, and, for that matter, in *The Will to Knowledge*, is that the above perspectives involve a significant act of displacement, insofar as they effectively occult the manner in which, subsequent to the French Revolution, the exercise of power over people became exponentially more pervasive and meticulous. That is, through a retrieval from obscurity, and a reconsideration, of those documents that emerged both prior and subsequent to the French Revolution, Foucault provides a very different history of the present that is not couched in terms of any narrative of 'progress.' Rather, it debunks the idea of the present as a more benign and humane era, and does so by illustrating how it continues to be informed by technologies that are orientated around not only controlling ever more intimate aspects of individual existence, but also extending such control over ever greater segments of the (global) population (*DP*, 30–31).

Consequently, for many readers of *Discipline and Punish*, what is alarming is not Foucault's opening description of the brutal public torture of the regicide Damiens, which occurred under the auspices of the *ancien régime* in 1757 (*DP*, 3). Rather, what serves as a source of growing distress is the matrix of power relations that Foucault subsequently draws into conspicuousness through the text. This is not

only because the reader rapidly becomes aware of the fact that they are being presented with a description of the long-forgotten organizational blueprint that has effectively informed almost every aspect of their subjectivity, from their most banal habits to their most expansive cosmological views. In addition, it is also because the reasons for the design and implementation of such organization, far from being self-evident, emerge as quite arbitrary. That is, they emerge as orientated *not* around the continual pursuit of the best of all possible worlds, so to speak, under the influence of a new and broad magnanimity, but rather around an extension of power that knows no limits whatsoever, and that derives its sustenance from the individuals it subjugates. Indeed, it would appear that, ironically, beneath the nightmarish tyranny of the scaffold, more discursive spaciousness surrounded the ordinary person than currently exists for the disciplinary subject within the modern welfare state.

The extent to which this is the case becomes apparent when one juxtaposes the age of the scaffold with the subsequent era of disciplinary power. That is, according to Foucault, in terms of the former, the discursive spaciousness that surrounded the ordinary person was afforded largely by their relative anonymity, which stood in marked contrast to the salient identity of the monarch. Understandably, such anonymity, in turn, required the sovereign's generic roar to issue forth from and resound around the scaffold, via the spectacle of torture, in the interest of governance, because the situation was one in which the majority of people watched and then restrained themselves, in fearful recollection of how a single person had been tortured for failing to practice restraint (*DP*, 47–50, 57–59, 192). However, in terms of the disciplinary era, these arrangements were largely inverted. That is, while the growing bureaucracy that replaced the monarch became ever more anonymous, the previous relative anonymity of the ordinary person gave way to the increasingly particular identification of each *as* a disciplinary subject. Although the capacity for control that was facilitated by such highly discriminate identification obviated the need for any spectacle of torture to maintain authority, the situation was now one in which *all* individuals, regardless of whether or not they were guilty of any crime, became subject to ever more elaborate and chronic forms of discursive domination (*DP*, 7–24, 187–193).

Admittedly, as Foucault recalls, between the scaffold and disciplinary power, the semio-technique of punishment dominated for a brief

period of about twenty years, during which time it was employed to strengthen the impact of public punishment while concomitantly avoiding the excessive brutality of the scaffold. To succeed in this, it was couched in a number of highly specific rules, all of which aimed at providing the population with precise and detailed didactic examples of the inexorable consequences of crime, through and in terms of which they could be educated to avoid perpetrating criminal offences (*DP*, 94–99, 115). That is, in accordance with these rules, the convict, for example, because he was engaged in public works, also remained visible in society, and thereby benefited those against whom he had committed an offence not only through the work he performed, but also through the way in which he functioned as an edifying sign, aimed at dissolving any potential criminal tendencies within those members of the public who viewed his predicament (*DP*, 109).

However, despite the sensibleness of the semio-technique, on account of its specificity, which stood in glaring contrast to the erstwhile ambiguous roar of the monarch that had emanated from the scaffold, it was soon replaced by incarceration. For Foucault, this constitutes the essential problem; that is, the question that he endeavors to answer in *Discipline and Punish* concerns the reasons for the complete privileging, within a mere twenty years after the French Revolution, of the mechanistic banality of incarceration, over the dynamic creativity of the semio-technique. Indeed, this question becomes all the more poignant in the light of the social potential of the semio-technique, on account of its orientation around a multi-layered dialogical didacticism, which is almost completely lacking in incarceration, characterized as it is by a great dull monologue that makes no apparent distinction between, for example, petty theft and grand larceny (*DP*, 115, 130–131). The disturbing answer to this question that Foucault subsequently provides is that, in effect, incarceration became privileged over the scaffold and the semio-technique *not* because its ostensibly humanitarian orientation resonated with the ostensibly benign magnanimity of the new governmental authority. Rather, it was because it both presented a means of exercising infinitesimal power over the prisoner and constituted an organizational model that could readily be applied beyond the walls of the penitentiary in relation to a population of disciplinary subjects (*DP*, 135–141). Significantly, the embrace of incarceration as a legitimate punitive form was accompanied by the embrace of the notion that the individual could, through a number of technologies, be transformed not

partially but rather in his/her *entirety* (*DP*, 125). In this regard, of the various technologies detailed by Foucault, arguably, four in particular have been of paramount importance, namely the *regimentation of space and time*, the *dossier, panopticism*, and the *deployment of sexuality*.

Firstly, with regard to the regimentation of space, the four central principles are those of 'enclosure,' 'partitioning,' 'functional sites' and 'rank.' To begin with, in a manner analogous to the prison, not only the school and the workshop, but also the hospital and the barracks, among other sites, all became increasingly orientated around the principle of 'enclosure.' In terms of this, a particular place became regarded as fundamentally different from the places that surrounded it, in virtue of it being allocated exclusively for the purpose of certain activities; correlatively, it was advanced that the efficacy and productivity of those activities depended on the rigorous maintenance of the distinction of this place from those that surrounded it. At the other end of the scale, just as disciplinary power required a constant account of each prisoner's whereabouts within the greater enclosure of the prison, so too, in terms of the principle of 'partitioning,' within schools, workshops, hospitals, barracks, etcetera, each individual was allocated a particular place, again, in the interest of enhancing efficiency by eradicating the possibility of arbitrary movement. Moreover, between the extremes of the macro level of enclosure and the micro level of partitioning, the principle of 'functional sites' was employed, which involved the compartmentalizing of spaces within any enclosure that had previously been utilized for an array of purposes, and the use of various forms of supervision to ensure both that only certain activities were performed in such spaces and that they were performed efficiently. Further still, in addition to the above, which all resulted in either *actual* architectural design or the designation of *actual* space, there emerged the organization of *virtual* space, via the use of 'rank.' In terms of this principle, individuals derived their status not from their distribution within the space of the enclosure, but rather from their distribution within a network of classificatory relations that, in many ways, through the instantiation of hierarchies, pitted each against the other (*DP*, 141–147).

With regard to the regimentation of time, the five central principles are those of the disciplinary 'timetable,' the 'temporal elaboration of the act,' the 'correlation of the body and the gesture,' the 'body-object articulation,' and the principle of 'exhaustive use,' all of which aimed to control activity with ever more precision and economy. To begin with,

the 'timetable,' as it had existed before the eighteenth century, was significantly transformed insofar as time became increasingly measured in terms of minutes and seconds, in the interest of augmenting the quality with which time was utilized. In turn, the 'temporal elaboration of the act' involved forcing a cadence upon specific acts, performed within the increasingly detailed framework provided by the new disciplinary timetable, in terms of which the progression of all of the stages of any particular activity were then orchestrated. For example, in contrast to the early seventeenth century, during which time soldiers were simply required to march generally in group formation, by the middle of the eighteenth century, disciplinary instructions included highly specific details of exactly *how* each step should be taken, and recognized only four particular steps as legitimate. Similarly, through the 'correlation of the body and the gesture' and the 'body-object articulation,' movements and activities became subject to increasingly narrow definition and classificatory re-structuring, in order to achieve their interminable and accurate duplication. Finally, as implied by its name, through the principle of 'exhaustive use,' disciplinary power both regarded every second of time as harboring infinite reserves of untapped productivity, and, consequently, sought to squeeze such productivity from such seconds without end (*DP*, 149–154).

Secondly, because of what Foucault refers to as the technology of the dossier, adherence by ordinary individuals to the above forms of spatio-temporal regimentation became increasingly imperative. This was because this technology effectively inverted the honor associated with having one's deeds inscribed in historical accounts or literature—as a consequence of the prestige of birth or as a reward for heroism—which was customary before the eighteenth century, insofar as it turned such descriptions into a form of punishment that was meted out to the lowliest members of society, namely those of *any* class found guilty of offence. Although not explicitly violent, this was by no means a modest form of punishment, because when it was not directly associated with incarceration, it extended the reach of carceral power through its indelible recording of both petty and grand disgraces; through this, it formed a discursive prison of sorts, from which the guilty, even after their release from the concrete penal institutions, could never escape. Accordingly, because the dossier was advanced as the *only* legitimate account of an individual's history—that is, of an individual's illegitimate activity, or failure to act, in the past—it increasingly obliged all

individuals, including those outside of the concrete penal institutions, to regulate their own behavior, in order to avoid both the inscription of negative judgments within the dossier, and the subsequent experience of being discriminated against on account of such inscriptions (*DP*, 187–192). Understandably, this was *not* a mere formalization via documentation of what communal memory had, prior to the disciplinary era, recalled generally and vaguely about the individuals in any given locality, because the range of potential infractions continued to increase exponentially, as a consequence of the new disciplinary regimentation of space and time.

Thirdly, because all of the above demanded increasing vigilance and effort from those caught up within the disciplinary discursive framework, there emerged the need to develop further technologies of surveillance that could constantly monitor disciplinary subjects' illegitimate activity or their failure to act. Arguably, the most important technology highlighted by Foucault in this regard is panopticism (*DP*, 200–204). To a large extent, before panopticism became instantiated as a key technology within both penal institutions in particular and carceral society in general, or, in other words, before Jeremy Bentham's explicit formulation of the concept in the architectural design of the Panopticon,[1] medicine, as Foucault points out in "The Eye of Power," had already orientated itself substantially around the issue of placing the ill under surveillance.[2] Correlatively, in "Truth and Juridical Forms," Foucault goes on to explain how Bentham's formulation of the Panopticon was articulated in similarly benign terms, insofar as it was advanced as valuable because of its capacity to be utilized not only in the interest of exercising punitive justice, but also in relation to the diverse demands of pedagogy, productivity, and what would later become psychiatric care.[3] However,

[1] According to Foucault, in its 'original' form, the Panopticon consisted of a central tower with windows surrounded by a ring-shaped construction, which comprised of multiple stories of individual cells, each of which opened up toward the tower. However, because the occupant of any cell was precluded from ever knowing whether or not they were being observed from the tower, all those who were incarcerated in this manner felt the weight of the (potential) supervisor's *gaze* simultaneously and indefinitely, with the result that they were steadily obliged to adjust their behavior accordingly (*DP*, 200–201).

[2] Michel Foucault, "The Eye of Power" (1977), in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 146–147.

[3] Michel Foucault, "Truth and Juridical Forms" (1973), in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2002), 58.

because such surveillance was concomitant not only with the forms of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation, discussed earlier, but also with the additional surveillance technology of the dossier, arguably, it not only functioned to improve overall efficiency. In addition, it also, albeit inadvertently, functioned to create the individual as a discursive object and to lend increasing integrity to it, in proportion to both the constant augmentation of the complexity of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation, and the ever more detailed inscriptions of the individual within the dossier. In fact, Foucault emphasizes this quite considerably, through drawing the dramatic contrast between life in the Greek *polis* and life in contemporary surveillance society. In terms of this, the latter emerges as so utterly removed from the former that it could, to all intents and purposes, be the product of another world, notwithstanding the nostalgia of many contemporary individuals that causes them to conjure up an intimate connection with this past. In particular, Foucault seems to suggest that the deep interiority with which contemporary individuals have become imbued, and with which they continue to imbue themselves, on account of such regimentation and surveillance, has effectively obliterated their capacity even to imagine the Greek experience (or for that matter any other non-disciplinary experience) with any semblance of accuracy (*DP*, 217).

Importantly, the above three disciplinary technologies should not be thought of as things *imposed* upon unwilling populations by an authoritarian regime, because they were only instantiated and recognized as legitimate through ubiquitous complicity with them on the part of such populations. Arguably, the reason for this complicity, in turn, rests with a general uncritical credence granted to the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of such technologies, namely 'evolutive historicity.' In short, Foucault advances that evolutive historicity, in terms of which disciplinary society has been legitimated as the latest, and hence most advanced, evolutionary phase of social development, has been so thoroughly endorsed that it continues to be regarded in the contemporary era as something utterly incontestable. Yet, evolutive historicity does not afford those in the present the opportunity to rest on their laurels, so to speak, because it became imbricated with the intense eighteenth century reappraisal of both individuals and societies, in terms of which both were thoroughly divested of their erstwhile static habits and compelled to shoulder the yoke of perpetual and urgent advancement, as though it constituted an ontological obligation. Thus, evolutive historicity continues to demand that all individuals struggle endlessly

toward an *earthly* form of salvation, equated with the attainment of an ever more efficient social body (*DP*, 160–162). Arguably, this constant deference to the future makes the implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity distinctly transcendent in orientation.

Fourthly, as already mentioned, in *Society Must Be Defended*, Foucault maintains that in addition to the above three disciplinary controls that emerged in the early eighteenth century, there also emerged, in the late eighteenth century, an entire range of regulatory controls informed by bio-power, which blended faultlessly with the existing disciplinary technologies and simultaneously modified and extended their sphere of influence.[4] With regard to this, in *The Will to Knowledge*, Foucault advances that bio-power, for the most part, developed on the basis of the deployment of alliance, which entailed the formation of systems of alliance through arranged marriages, in a way that allowed the circulation of power, wealth and property to remain within a relatively small network of relations. That is, when, as a consequence of the socio-cultural and politico-economic changes of the eighteenth century, the deployment of alliance lost its significance in proportion to the rise of the bourgeoisie, it was progressively usurped, at least in the West, by a new deployment, namely the deployment of sexuality (*HS*, 106).[5] Consequently, Foucault asserts that the late eighteenth century preoccupation with sex should be understood not as a new focus on a hitherto marginalized natural phenomenon, but rather as the result of the emergence of a new discursive object, namely sexuality, which facilitated the exercise of an immense amount of power through the ensuing proliferation of discourses that reified it (*HS*, 32, 105). However, as Foucault explains in an article entitled "The History of Sexuality," the new regulatory controls of such bio-power were able to inform subjectivity to a far greater degree than earlier disciplinary controls because they involved far more invasive power relations. In short, bio-power did not operate in a manner akin to disciplinary power, which, over time, required individuals' habituation of a series of correct responses

[4] Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 242.

[5] According to Foucault, while, on the one hand, the deployment of alliance was characterized by a set of relatively enduring rules through which a politicization of relationships occurred—a politicization by means of which social hierarchies were maintained in a relatively static fashion—on the other hand, the deployment of sexuality was characterized by an increasing array of changing regulative techniques through which individuals' sexual experiences, understood in a very broad sense, became politicized as a means of facilitating the endless expansion of the reach of power (*HS*, 106–107).

to a corresponding series of organizational and surveillance technologies. Instead, it functioned in a manner akin to a mirror, insofar as it not only instantaneously presented to the same individuals an ostensible reflection of their hitherto unrecognized nature, but also thereby allowed them to become increasingly and irremediably mesmerized by the ensuing illusion of supposed likeness.[6]

As such, it was not a matter of imposing what Foucault refers to in *The Will to Knowledge* as the four anchorage points of the deployment of sexuality on an otherwise unwilling population; that is, the four anchorage points of the woman plagued by irresistible bouts of hysteria, the child plagued by irresistible onanistic tendencies, and the adult plagued by irresistible perverse predilections, all three of which were counterbalanced against the fourth ideal point of the hypothetical heterosexual couple who engaged only in reproductive sex (*HS*, 104–105).[7] Rather, it was a matter of affording the population the opportunity both to recognize itself in such anchorage points and, subsequently, as Foucault explains in *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1974–1975*, to 'report back' to the medical authorities on the existence of any anomalies or aberrations that were found.[8] Through such *cautious* and oblique means, enigmatic and protean sexual dynamics were thereby fabricated in relation to bodies and desires, and then squeezed from the individuals in question, via penitent and halting confessions, in which the barest outlines of such dynamics were either prudently hinted at or vaguely alluded to (*HS*, 47–48).

In turn, the momentum of this increased exponentially in the nineteenth century, on account of a compensatory discursive inversion of the late eighteenth century cautious approach to sex, which involved

---

[6] Michel Foucault, "The History of Sexuality" (1977), in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 186.

[7] According to Foucault, in relation to the four anchorage points of the deployment of sexuality, firstly, the female mind became increasingly construed as subject to periodic destabilization, on account of the excessive sexual desire which the female body was thought to harbor. Secondly, all children were thought to be vulnerable to sexual desire in a manner that endangered not only themselves but also the future health of the entire social body. Thirdly, anomalous sexual desires in adults became the subject of medical science in the interest of developing therapeutic remedies for them. Fourthly, in relation to heterosexual couples, there occurred an emphasis on birth control that was couched not only in socio-cultural terms, under the auspices of medicine, but also in politico-economic terms (*HS*, 104–105).

[8] Michel Foucault, *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1974–1975*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2003), 250–251.

the emergence of a new imperative to proclaim sex unashamedly. This compensatory discursive inversion was motivated by the argument that such late eighteenth century caution was in fact dangerous, as a consequence of the way in which, albeit inadvertently, it had tried to keep in check an irrepressible force in a manner that was hazardous to health (*HS*, 128–129). As such, although, subsequent to the eighteenth century, the earlier widespread 'reporting back' to the medical authorities by the population became subject to progressive dissolution, this should not be confused with the dissolution of the legacy of eighteenth century anxiety over sex. Rather, such anxiety has, for the most part, continued through to the contemporary era in the form of an inflection of the above mentioned discursive practice. In short, this inflection (which characterizes much of contemporary popular culture) seeks to endlessly distance itself from the so-called sexual repression of the eighteenth century, by zealously rejecting any semblance of caution in relation to sex, in favor of proclaiming it ever more fervently and 'authentically.' Indeed, in terms of the latter approach, because the progressive emergence of sex from beneath the erstwhile 'inauthentic' garb of Victorian bourgeois prudery is, in many ways, regarded as synonymous with the dawning of a new socially liberated era, efforts to usher in such an (ostensibly) enlightened age often become readily imbued with quasi-messianic status (*HS*, 6–7). The great irony of such investment, however, derives from the way in which every such proclamation betrays the persistence of one's continued complicity with the imperatives of the deployment of sexuality, rather than one's growing freedom from them (*HS*, 159). Yet, arguably, like the ubiquitous complicity of individuals with the three disciplinary controls, discussed earlier, such ubiquitous complicity with the imperatives of the deployment of sexuality is largely a consequence of the general uncritical credence granted to its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption. This is the assumption that the body is infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth. That is, with regard to truth, unlike, for example, in the courtship rituals in ancient Greece that occurred between the older man or *erastes* and the youth or *eromenos*, in terms of which, as Foucault points out in *The Use of Pleasure*, the latter exchanged sex *for* the 'truth' or knowledge that only the former could provide,[9] in terms of the deployment of sexuality, sex became construed as a source *of*

[9] Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 196.

'truth' or knowledge itself. Similarly, with regard to power, unlike in terms of the deployment of alliance, where sex functioned to canalize extant political power relations,[10] in terms of the deployment of sexuality, sex became construed as something that was itself tremendously powerful (*HS*, 58, 106–107).

Thus, although, as Foucault advances in "The Punitive Society," the emergence of disciplinary/bio-power constituted part of the shift in terms of which religious authority in Europe was supplanted by secular power,[11] the respective implicit founding assumptions of the different technologies which subsequently facilitated the exercise of such secular power remained thoroughly transcendent in orientation. Consequently, notwithstanding the dramatic differences between earlier religiously orientated discursive practices and the later tightly enmeshed disciplinary/bio-power discursive networks of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, arguably, the latter never really shrugged off the mantle of religion. Rather, on the contrary, they came to constitute a form of pseudo-religion, replete with, on the one hand, a perpetually deferred salvation in the concept of evolutive historicity, and, on the other hand, a deep mysticism in the concept of the human body as something infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth.

In the light of this, it was perhaps only to be expected that, as Foucault indicates in *Discipline and Punish*, the radical preoccupation of disciplinary/bio-power with all the minute machinations and details of everyday things would not only resonate with certain earlier Christian practices, namely those practices possessed of a similar (albeit less radical) orientation, but would also lead inexorably to the absorption of such practices into disciplinary/bio-power technologies (*DP*, 140). Indeed, in each case, the four disciplinary/bio-power technologies discussed above were not only predicated on the idea of the individual's capacity for rational autonomy, in a manner akin to the Christian discursive practices from which they, in a sense, derived; in addition, they also required the individual to exercise far *more* rational autonomy than ever before. This, in turn, was not only because these four technologies transformed the Christian notion of 'sin' by *increasing*

[10] See note 5 above.
[11] Michel Foucault, "The Punitive Society" (1972), in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2000), 32.

the number of possible transgressions in relation to the industrial, social and administrative developments of disciplinary/bio-power society. Importantly, in addition, it was also because the respective implicit founding assumptions of such disciplinary/bio-power technologies augmented the *intensity* of the significance of such 'sin,' by re-inscribing it in terms of new transcendent orientated horizons.

CHAPTER THREE

SECULARIZED/MEDICALIZED CONFESSION AND THE PROBLEMATIZATION OF RATIONAL AUTONOMY

However, Foucault also thematizes the way in which, in diametric opposition to the four different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, discussed in the previous chapter, other *psychiatric* technologies emerged concomitantly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from within the spectrum of bio-power. In short, these not only propagated new myths of madness that intimated the *impossibility* of subjects being able to exercise rational autonomy in perpetuity. In addition, they also couched such myths in terms of a new transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption, namely one that advanced the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately had to defer authority. Consequently, disciplinary/bio-power society became infused with tension not only because of the way in which its different technologies simultaneously advanced conflicting concepts of autonomy, but also because of the concomitant incongruity between the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions, all of which, in effect, constituted subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict.

Unfortunately, the account of the arising of such discursive tension is unavoidably complex and convoluted, owing largely to the way in which it involved a series of discursive feints, thrusts and parries on the part of psychiatric and juridical authorities, in a duel over the issue of legitimacy, which continues to be fought in the contemporary era though through far more muted means. However, arguably, in its early stages, this duel involved four rather drastic gestures that, although no longer repeated, can nevertheless be understood as both setting the tone for the 'dialogue' between the two great discursive authorities and establishing its order of exchange. In short, the four moves can be summarized as follows: an *initial move* was made by psychiatric authorities in the late eighteenth century to extend their sphere of influence. This was followed by a *counter-move* launched by juridical authorities to extend their own sphere of influence, which involved a

partial co-option of the myths used by the psychiatric authorities in their strategy to attain further legitimacy. In turn, this became subject to a *counter-counter-move* on the part of psychiatric authorities that, ultimately, led to their threatening of juridical power via the notion of homicidal monomania. After this, a somewhat *conciliatory move* on the part of juridical authorities established a situation of compromise that saw a more even distribution of power and, concomitantly, the muting (rather than the silencing) of the antagonism between psychiatric and juridical authorities.

To begin with, in order to obtain a better perspective of the way in which the new myths of madness advanced by psychiatric authorities in the late eighteenth century, as part of their *initial move* to extend their sphere of influence, differed from earlier notions of madness, it is helpful to consider madness within the context of the Greco-Roman tradition. This is because, as Foucault points out in *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, for a long time the ideas of this tradition continued to inform the prevailing view of madness as the end result of an habitual excess of passion.[1] In other words, as Foucault later emphasizes in both *The Use of Pleasure* and *Fearless Speech*, madness was traditionally perceived as following on from the repeated failure to restrain passion through the exercise of moderation and self-mastery,[2] which allowed such lack of restraint to take root and become ever more profoundly entrenched until it ultimately usurped the individual's capacity for autonomy.[3] As such, madness did not constitute an entity-in-itself that could be restrained since, by definition, acts underpinned by such excesses of passion were formless, in the sense that they emerged, gradually, through an erosion of constitution as a result of the habitual absence of self-restraint. In effect, Foucault illustrates this neatly in relation to the similar distinction between the positive and negative sense of *parrhesia*, or the practice of open and honest speaking; in terms of this, while *parrhesia* in its positive sense was able to effect political change because it was the product of years of philosophical training and development, *parrhesia* in its negative sense was utterly useless in this respect because,

[1] Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Mentor, 1967), 79.

[2] Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure*, 64–65.

[3] Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2001), 152–153.

as the product of years of negligence and laxity, it amounted to little more than loud prattle.[4] Thus, like madness, such loud prattle was not an independent entity-in-itself that could be restrained or suppressed, but was rather something that only emerged after the prolonged and habitual absence of self-restraint.

In turn, Foucault points out how significant aspects of this perspective on madness survived not only through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but also well into the seventeenth century, insofar as madness was increasingly couched in moralistic terms as the consequence of a lack of moderation. In effect, while in the Middle Ages madness had been construed as one of many forms of immorality, in the Renaissance it became elevated in status to the primary form of immorality (*MC*, 30–31). Although the reasons for this were numerous, arguably, at least to some extent, they included the fact that, as Foucault indicates in "On the Genealogy of Ethics," throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance pastoral power continued to be opposed by certain Christian factions, most notably those which echoed the emphasis on autonomy of the earlier first/second century C.E. Hellenistic/Roman 'cultures of the self.' In short, these factions, in various ways and to various degrees, rejected the idea that the ecclesiastical institution played the primary role in facilitating one's salvation, in favor of foregrounding one's individual, and hence independent, pursuit of salvation.[5] In fact, in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, Foucault goes so far as to advance the above tensions—between theology and autonomous spiritual practice—as constitutive of the central struggle within Christianity until the seventeenth century.[6] That is, to state things more bluntly, resistance to Christian pastoral power was largely a product of the incongruity between, on the one hand, the somewhat infantile dispositions it engendered through its theological orientation, and, on the other hand, the demand for maturity that constituted a primary requisite for any pursuit of a more spiritual path, orientated around a rarefaction of the self. With regard to this, in "Pastoral Power and Political Reason" Foucault elaborates upon how, instead of engendering mature independence and, concomitantly, facilitating a rarefaction of the self, Christian pastoral power, in conjunction with theology, engendered an

---

[4] Ibid., 12–14, 66.

[5] Michel Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics" (1983), in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2000), 278.

[6] Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 26–27.

infantile submission to faith and lent increasing integrity to the self. This emerges quite clearly in relation to the four discursive pillars of pastoral power. Firstly, it involved the notion that the pastor, as shepherd, was entirely responsible for the flock entrusted to him, the importance of which was further magnified by the additional notion that while the pastor could be judged by God for failing his sheep in this respect, conversely, he could also purchase his own salvation through giving them sufficient aid. Secondly, pastoral power involved an emphasis on obedience, in that the flock was expected to submit wholeheartedly to the pastor. Thirdly, it involved a form of knowledge production, in terms of which the pastor was required to have a highly detailed individualizing knowledge of every member of his flock; understandably, this lent increasing integrity to the self, rather than facilitating any rarefaction of the self. Fourthly, pastoral power involved the stern imperative that everyone occupy themselves constantly with the labor of mortification and renunciation, in the interest of attaining eternal salvation for a hypothetically irreducible soul, with which the increasingly integral self constituted through pastoral power readily identified.[7]

Although this conflict appears to have ended around the seventeenth century after Christianity had emptied itself of the last vestiges of spirituality, this did not mean the end of a valorization of self-discipline. Rather, according to Foucault, self-discipline as a form of spiritual technology became transmuted into something more utilitarian, insofar as there occurred, during the seventeenth century, an increasing valorization of self-discipline in relation to work. Understandably, within such a discursive milieu, madmen, because of their inability to work efficiently, or, in some cases, to work at all, became particularly subject to moral condemnation once labor was instituted as a remedial measure in the houses of confinement within which they were detained (*MC*, 56–57). Yet, arguably, these madmen were regarded in a negative light *not* because their madness constituted a dangerous and irresistible force, which had usurped their autonomy and over which they had no power, but rather because their inability to work was considered to be the result of their habitual laziness and acquiescence to vice. As such, in the seventeenth century, madness was construed not as a fundamental entity-in-itself, but rather as an incoherent and hence empty form

[7] Michel Foucault, "Pastoral Power and Political Reason" (1979), in *Religion and Culture*, ed. Jeremy Carrette (New York: Routledge, 1999), 142–143.

of language; consequently, to confine madness did not involve any imprisonment of a hazardous entity-in-itself, but rather the relegation of such empty incoherent language to an appropriate domain, namely one on the margins of society that was similarly empty of all societal norms and practices (*MC*, 87–88, 100).

Following on from this, for much of the eighteenth century, madness continued to be regarded in similar terms, insofar as it was advanced not only that one became mentally ill through an excess of, among other things, sentimentality and sex, but also that, as such, the onset of madness indicated moral culpability (*MC*, 130–131). However, this was, in addition, accompanied by something new, which, in effect, constituted the *initial move* on the part of psychiatric authorities to extend their sphere of influence. That is, in the latter part of the eighteenth century, there developed an increasing dread of madness because it was argued not only that earlier people had been stronger and hence more resistant to it, but also that the sources of madness had subsequently proliferated, with the consequence that madness began to constitute an ostensibly imminent threat to the greater population (*MC*, 172). From a genealogical perspective, this was of immense importance, because, as Foucault explains in "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century," it not only resulted in the creation of a vast and expanding network of privatized medicine that was marketed to bourgeois families. In addition, in its address (and concomitant augmentation) of the growing demand for individual medical attention, this network effectively laid the foundation for the great politicization of health which occurred in the nineteenth century, and in terms of which disease became increasingly construed as something of socio-economic significance, such that it had to be targeted through overarching policy.[8]

On the one hand, all of this facilitated the immense augmentation of the power of psychiatric authorities and the concomitant embroidering of the supposed sagacity of the psychiatrist. However, on the other hand, because these changes involved the propagation of the idea that the individual could *not* exercise rational autonomy in perpetuity, they were only afforded at the expense of those discourses that had previously advanced the capacity of individuals to exercise autonomy

[8] Michel Foucault, "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century" (1976), in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 166–168.

and self-restraint. The effect of this, in turn, became evident soon after 1789, in the emergence of a different attitude toward the punitive measure of the scaffold. That is, as Foucault points out in *Discipline and Punish*, although it is usually advanced that public executions were abandoned around this time because of growing resistance to them on account of the terrible violence that they involved, it is important not to retrospectively imbue such protests with all of the humanitarian sentiments of the present (*DP*, 73, 78). Arguably, this is not least because it would appear that the *actual* decision to abolish the scaffold was, to a large extent, underpinned by an appraisal of the public as increasingly undisciplined, such that they threatened to render the process of public execution difficult to control (*DP*, 59–61). The cogency of this idea is augmented by two different contentions.

Firstly, although Foucault maintains that it was the disciplinary practices of the early eighteenth century that gave *birth* to the notion of *man*, around which modern humanism subsequently orientated itself and developed (*DP*, 140–141), arguably, this new discursive object of *man* only grew to *maturity* in the interstices of the discourses that Foucault thematizes in *The Order of Things*.[9] As such, the subsequent

[9] That is, in *The Order of Things*, Foucault advances that *man*, understood as something possessed of a deep enigmatic density, which is both valuable in itself and constantly threatened by the fragility of the mortal frame that encompasses it, was only opened up as a discursive object and imbued with transcendental status by the nineteenth century discourses of 'life,' 'labor' and 'language.' In short, Foucault advances that, firstly, from the nineteenth century onward, and in terms of the discourse of life, there occurred a shift away from understanding nature purely in taxonomic terms—that is, as something which could be thoroughly understood through a fastidious labeling and categorization of its separate parts—in favor of a move toward understanding nature in synthetic terms—that is, as something which *lived* as a complex whole in virtue of the diverse and complicated relationships between its constituent parts. Thus, as a consequence of the proliferating complexity of the ever more intricate systems that were henceforth understood as facilitating life, life became regarded as something 'deep' or densely enigmatic, quite simply because the closer one looked at it, the more one discovered about it. Secondly, from the nineteenth century onward, and in terms of the discourse of labor, questions concerning the issue of remuneration for work were increasingly considered against the 'profound' existential backdrop of such a synthetic notion of life, insofar as it was increasingly understood that, through labor, the densely enigmatic phenomenon of life was not only sustained, but was also progressively worn out. Thirdly, from the nineteenth century onward, and in terms of the discourse of language, there occurred a relinquishing of the erstwhile hierarchical classification, arrangement and evaluation of written languages, in favor of an embrace of language in all of its spoken forms as something dynamic, organic, and 'deep,' insofar as both its contemporary protean features and its history of development could be endlessly explored and speculated upon, in a manner that lent to it an enigmatic density. Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 272, 280, 293–297, 304, 310–316. However, although these

humanitarian axiology that developed around the idea of *man* could not have been a significant influence in the decision, immediately after 1789, to abandon the scaffold. It is perhaps for this reason that Foucault both explicitly cautions against an overly optimistic interpretation of the reform of the justice system, after 1789, as the product of growing humanitarianism, and criticizes the way in which such interpretations have habitually been adopted. Understandably, this is because through the habitual adoption of such interpretations, there occurs a powerful endorsement of the idea of a general moral evolution that led society to experience the horrors of the scaffold as intolerable, which, in turn, simultaneously exercises violence against, and eclipses the possibility of, any critical appraisal of the cruelty (and indeed the tensions) that continue to pervade disciplinary/bio-power society (*DP*, 7, 78).

Secondly, as Foucault points out, the insurrections that occurred around the scaffold were motivated, at least in part, by the way in which the masses both increasingly experienced a sense of solidarity with the victims of public execution, and increasingly experienced themselves as imperiled as they stood before the brutality of the law (*DP*, 63, 73). However, these protests occurred *before* 1789, which make them indissociable from the growing popular resistance to the *ancien régime* during that period.[10] That is, not only did they derive most of their impetus from the growing socio-cultural and politico-economic conflict of the era, but after the French Revolution the new juridical authorities could also not have failed to be aware of the intimate relationship between the unpopularity of the erstwhile *ancien régime* and such insurrections. Thus, the threat of such continued insurrection in the absence of the *ancien régime* would only have provided a very tenuous justification for the abandonment of the scaffold at this point in history.

Instead, it is possible to understand the abandonment of the scaffold, and its replacement by the new semio-technique of punishment, as arising out of a growing concern over the effects of the brutal example of public torture on a population already allegedly predisposed, more than

changes took place in the nineteenth century within the discourses of life, labor and language, because human beings live, work and speak, they too, around this time, albeit inadvertently, became imbued with the same aura of 'depth' and enigmatic density that had become indissociable from these three discourses. Consequently, ideas of *man*, as a being possessed of a profound human spirit, for whom and against whom the violence of the scaffold became intolerable, could only fully mature after this time.

[10] The dates of the notable protests mentioned by Foucault are 1775, 1781 and 1786 (*DP*, 60–61).

ever before, to excess. However, this needs to be considered against the backdrop of the discursive struggle between psychiatric and juridical authorities discussed earlier. In short, the response on the part of juridical authorities, to the tacit assertion by psychiatric authorities of new myths of madness—which concerned individuals' decreasing capacity for autonomy and self-restraint, and which had enhanced the power of the psychiatrist—was not simply one of quiet acquiescence. Rather, it took the form of a *counter-move* that was orientated around a co-option of these new myths as an apparatus of legitimation for the extension of juridical power. That is, these new myths were utilized to lend a veneer of legitimacy to the creation and imposition of what Foucault describes as a more precise system of justice; namely, one which could cast an intricately woven discursive net over the whole social body in the interest of controlling it more effectively (*DP*, 78), and which was increasingly construed as necessary in the wake of individuals' ostensibly decreasing capacity to exercise autonomy and self-restraint.

As such, on the one hand, the new myths of madness advanced by psychiatry rendered the erstwhile generic (macro) roar of the monarch obsolete, because of the way in which they posited a general decline in the capacity of individuals to practice autonomy and self-restraint, which, proportionately, reduced the inhibitory efficacy of the scaffold and its spectacles of punishment. Yet, on the other hand, juridical authorities, although they acquiesced to the legitimacy of such new myths by terminating the practice of public execution, simultaneously utilized the increasing credence with which these new myths were imbued to advance the necessity of instituting a new (micro) form of control over each member of the populace. This much emerges into conspicuousness in relation to Foucault's thematization of how the semio-technique of punishment constituted a specific way of exercising power over *all* individuals, through constraining everyone more firmly than ever before via sequences of conceptual association, namely those which emanated from, and which were orientated around, the vast array of symbols of justice that littered the social landscape (*DP*, 102–103). Thus, what the semio-technique involved was a multiplicity of highly specific dialogues between the juridical authorities and each individual, which occurred via the mediation of an array of symbolic penalties, and which derived from what was perceived as a new need to 'speak' to each person, individually, because of a general decline in the population's capacity to practice autonomy and self-restraint. Arguably,

the notion of such a declining ability on the part of the population reached its apogee in the advancement, by juridical authorities, of the concept of the *crime passionel.* This designated those spontaneous criminal acts underpinned by more opaque and sinister aspects of a supposedly criminal will, which erupted under exceptional conditions to usurp the individual's autonomy, and which were believed to be less susceptible to coercion, through contemplation of the inexorable consequences of antisocial actions evinced by the new public symbols of prosecution (*DP*, 100–101).

However, the economic failure of the houses of confinement, pointed out by Foucault in *Madness and Civilization* (*MC*, 50–54), arguably provided psychiatric authorities with the opportunity to respond to juridical power through what, in effect, amounted to a *counter-counter-move*. That is, this move not only drew support from the above mentioned juridical notions of criminality and the *crime passionel*, but also utilized such notions to further enhance the credence and power with which psychiatric authorities had recently become imbued. All of this began with the limiting of confinement to criminals and madmen, which, as Foucault indicates, occurred immediately after the French Revolution (*MC*, 190–191). In effect, this constituted an adumbration of both the dissolution of the erstwhile idea of madness as *nothing*, and the emergence of a new notion of madness as a distinct 'Other,' separate force or entity-in-itself. This was because, despite the distinction made by juridical authorities between criminals and madmen, these two categories of individual remained discursively connected, insofar as, just as the criminal was construed as plagued by criminality, so too, the madman was understood as plagued by madness. As Foucault suggests, this, in turn, gave rise to the possibility of extending compassion to madmen, insofar as they were now understood to be the *victims* of disease, rather than the culpable products of their own previous penchant for excess (*MC*, 191). Yet, a significant difference between the above two categories of individual was that while the criminal along with criminality were defined in terms of juridical discourses, the madman and his madness remained, for the most part, *undefined*. This, in due course, afforded psychiatric authorities the opportunity to define madness in a manner that facilitated the extension of their own influence over the discursive terrain. Crucial to this *counter-counter-move*, on the part of psychiatric authorities, was the culmination of the earlier appeals for the eviction of the mad from the houses of correction. This took the

form of the decision in 1790 both to set aside incarceration as a punishment for specific crimes and to either free madmen or admit them to specific hospitals that, ironically, did not yet exist (*MC*, 191–192). Thus, while juridical authorities may have intimated the idea of madness as an 'Other,' William Tuke and Philippe Pinel, among others, not only stepped in to cater for the expelled madmen through the subsequent creation of asylums, but also went on to theorize madness as a medical object from within these newly created domains (*MC*, 196). In this way, they effectively utilized both the decision of 1790 and the intimated notions that surrounded it to define and establish madness as a distinct 'Other,' separate force or entity-in-itself, which, because it could only be adequately identified and dealt with by the psychiatrist, further imbued psychiatric authorities with credence, with 'sagacity,' and, as a result, with power.

To begin with, in Tuke's asylum at York, insanity was defined as a disease which attacks its victims by destroying their capacity to employ reason and logic within everyday social interaction (*MC*, 195). However, because efficacious use of reason and logic was infused with a moral aura, and because madness was now construed as a distinct 'Other,' religious forms of organization were employed to establish *around* it a rigid social order, in the interest of extending ethical constraint, via the mind of the madman, *over* what was now understood as a separate force or entity-in-itself (*MC*, 196–197). This was very significant because what was thereby implicitly posited was the idea of madness as a phenomenon that could be, and that needed to be, *encompassed*. Indeed, what occurred in the asylum at this point, as a consequence of such moral restrictions, constitutes a particularly clarifying example of how power, as Foucault suggests in "Truth and Power," not only forbids certain things, but also, concomitantly and by default, creates other things through any attempt at prohibition.[11] In this case, what was produced by the restrictive measures instantiated by Tuke was the establishment of both the idea of madness as a distinct 'Other,' separate force or entity-in-itself, and the idea that individuals in whom it could be found were powerless to resist its dictates in the absence of externally imposed constraint. As such, *fear* of punishment constituted an essential element within the boundaries of the new asylum, insofar as, supported by the threat of retribution, constant observation was believed to be

[11] Foucault, "Truth and Power," 120.

capable of terrifying madness into silence and thereby empowering the individual, who had previously been victimized by its excesses, to resist its otherwise overwhelming imperatives (*MC*, 199).

Pinel's efforts differed somewhat from those employed by Tuke, insofar as Pinel's asylum comprised of a realm of ruthlessly enforced adherence to the ethical dictates of a distilled morality, namely one which was devoid of any overt or explicit references to traditional religion, either in the form of peripheral iconography or at the level of primary discourse (*MC*, 207). Nevertheless, in a manner akin to Tuke, Pinel also sought, ultimately, to constrain the irregularities of madness through subjecting the madman to constant observation and evaluation, in a way that effectively *wrapped* him up in a highly judgmental discursive matrix (*MC*, 214). Moreover, in this regard, Pinel's psychiatric advancements were arguably of greater importance than those of Tuke, not only because of the platform provided by his appointment as physician-in-chief at Bicêtre and at the Salpêtrière, but also because of the way in which these advancements were subsequently supported by his 1798 work, *Nosographie Philosophique*.

As Foucault indicates in *The Birth of the Clinic*, the madness pursued through Pinel's techniques of observation was not considered to be greatly dissimilar to the other diseases of the body hunted down through the investigative methods sketched out in the *Nosographie Philosophique*. That is, in terms of the latter, one also just observed the physical features of the disease and asked the patient a series of questions, because it was advanced that through the recurrent rotation of these two approaches the nature of the disease would slowly but steadily emerge.[12] However, Pinel's privileging of such observation, enquiry and description, over an investigation of the anatomy of the body, was predicated on an uncritical acceptance of the validity of the language that constituted the basis of such description, which, in turn, allowed a number of myths to infuse this discursive practice.[13] That is, at this point in time, there occurred a transposition of the alphabet, which constituted the model of analysis for grammarians, into clinical observation, where it was similarly advanced that notwithstanding the apparent complexity of any disease, it was always made up of a few

[12] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*, trans. A. M. Sheridan (London: Routledge, 2003), 137.
[13] Ibid., 138–139, 144, 161–162.

basic elements, in much the same way as any complex word was always made up from the letters of the alphabet. Yet, because of this, although diseases (in a manner akin to words) were regarded as composite phenomena, the exploration of the elaborate nature of their configuration was less important than the reduction of such configuration to its most basic elements, and the task of performing such reduction became the work of clinical practice. However, because this, in turn, involved less of a focus on discernible evidence of physical illness, and more of an emphasis on the metaphysical underpinnings of such ailments—which were otherwise thought to escape the untrained *gaze*—what it required of the doctor was not acute sensory faculties, but rather profound sagacious insight.[14]

Understandably, this idea facilitated the constant extension of the parameters of medical discourses, insofar as such discourses could only be delimited by the extent of the sagacity of the doctor, which, by definition, had no clearly defined limits. Admittedly, though, as Foucault points out in "The Birth of Social Medicine," with regard to physical ailments, all of this faced gradual curtailment from the end of the eighteenth century, because of the inception of modern medicine that centered on pathological anatomy.[15] However, from a clinical perspective at least, because it was advanced that madness lacked a corpse that could be opened up, so to speak, the sagacity of the psychiatrist continued to dominate in this domain. Arguably, this was of immense political significance because, insofar as it engendered the notion that clinical symptoms rather than morbid anatomy held the key to unraveling the mystery of *mental* disease, it imbued psychiatric authorities with a continually receding conceptual horizon that, in turn, facilitated the constant extension of their discursive parameters. Although, as Foucault contends in "The Confession of the Flesh," this did not engender any imperialistic ambitions on the part of psychiatry, it nevertheless did lead to a certain amount of infringement by psychiatric authorities upon the traditional discursive territory of juridical power, albeit only in the interest of establishing themselves more firmly.[16] This occurred most saliently when psychiatric authorities began posing questions as to the possibility of culpability in the presence of a madness that could

[14] Ibid., 145–149.

[15] Michel Foucault, "The Birth of Social Medicine" (1974), in *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin, 2002), 136.

[16] Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," 205.

manifest itself at any time, and under any circumstances, and which could only be adequately identified by the psychiatrist.

Perhaps the best, and most well-known, illustration of this emerges in relation to the 1835 case of Pierre Rivière. This is because, as Foucault explains in his foreword to *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, around this particular crime, and indeed around the body of Pierre Rivière, there raged a significant conflict between juridical authorities and psychiatric authorities, which derived from proposals by the latter that the validity of their concepts be acknowledged within future legal deliberation.[17] That is, as Patricia Moulin indicates in "Extenuating Circumstances," in 1832 the concept of extenuating circumstances had been introduced into the juridical framework, in terms of which the harshness of a sentence could conceivably be diminished if it was convincingly argued that conditions beyond the control of the perpetrator of a crime had either precipitated his/her actions, or at least influenced their magnitude. However, while, in terms of the law of that year, someone diagnosed as insane was automatically exempted from criminal responsibility, only psychiatric authorities were understood to be sufficiently qualified to pronounce on whether or not someone was mad, and, where this was found to be the case, the degree to which madness afflicted them. As such, although the psychiatrist was thereby afforded the opportunity to exercise increasing influence within any given court of law, this brought him into unavoidable conflict with juridical authorities, who had previously wielded near-hegemonic power within this domain.[18] In this regard, as Robert Castel points out in "The Doctors and Judges," it is highly likely that those people who gathered around the figure of Pierre Rivière and sought to have his sentence mitigated through having him declared insane, had their sights set on the exercise of influence in the formulation of the law of 1838, which, at that time, was under deliberation in association with the principal psychiatric authorities.[19] Indeed, as Alexandre Fontana

---

[17] Michel Foucault, foreword to *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), ix.

[18] Patricia Moulin, "Extenuating Circumstances" (1973), in *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), 212–215.

[19] Robert Castel, "The Doctors and Judges" (1973), in *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), 268.

advances in "The Intermittences of Rationality," this endeavor followed in the wake of attempts, on the part of certain of Pinel's proselytes, to lend further credence to his notion of a form of madness that could coexist with reason, which he had derived both from his clinical observation of eight examples of such a type of madness, and on the basis of his rejection of the idea that the ailment in question stemmed from cerebral lesions.[20] The potential political significance of these efforts cannot be overstated, because any successful legitimation of such a dynamic and elusive concept of madness, in the wake of the above ruling on extenuating circumstances, stood to severely debilitate the efficacy of juridical authority.[21]

The validity of this form of madness, known as 'monomania,' was initially vehemently contested by both juridical authorities and modern medicine, insofar as each of these groups sought, respectively, to lodge it within existing legal categories in relation to which culpability could be assigned, and to ground it in pathological anatomy.[22] In this way both groups, in effect, voiced opposition to the further embroidering of the sagacity of the psychiatrist in charge of the asylum, because of the way in which this would be synonymous with an unwarranted extension of his power. Nevertheless, this dispute notwithstanding, the disciples of Pinel appear to have been favored with a significant starting advantage, which further indicates the extent of the general credence with which their perspectives had already become imbued. This is because, as Philippe Riot recalls in "The Parallel Lives of Pierre Rivière," Rivière's memoir, which he had been requested to write,[23] was considered alongside the assessments of J. C. E. Vastel and his associates.[24] That

---

[20] Alexandre Fontana, "The Intermittences of Rationality" (1973), in *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), 274–276.

[21] Ibid., 277.

[22] Ibid., 278–279.

[23] Fontana elaborates upon this: wherever madness was suspected of persisting or underpinning a previous act, there occurred a recourse to writing, in terms of which the defendant would be asked to write a memoir that would subsequently be examined by a psychiatrist for reflections of insanity, which, it was advanced, the defendant could not recognize by him/herself. Arguably, in many respects, this practice adumbrated the later development of psychoanalysis; that is, in terms of psychoanalysis, there exists a similar notion of a subtext beneath any testimony that always resides beyond the conceptual reach of the author, and which he/she can only ever access with the assistance of the psychoanalyst. Fontana, "The Intermittences of Rationality," 284–285.

[24] Philippe Riot, "The Parallel Lives of Pierre Rivière" (1973), in *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the*

is, although the question of Rivière's madness hung in the balance, the institution of the recourse to writing, in relation to which only the psychiatrist was deemed adequately qualified to perceive reflections of madness, intimated an existing tacit and widespread acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the psychiatrist's sagacity. Moreover, from Jean Persil's "Report to His Majesty the King by the Minister of Justice," it is evident that such sagacity significantly outweighed any opposing juridical condemnation of Rivière. That is, although Persil refrained from lending his *overt* support to the assertion that Rivière had been subject to monomania, arguably, he nevertheless did so *implicitly*, by expressing deep doubt over Rivière's state of mind, on account of the strange form of reasoning madness that he appeared to suffer from,[25] which, to all intents and purposes, was definitive of monomania. Thus, even though, as indicated by Lhomedé Le Blanc's "Body Receipt by the Head Warden of the Central Prison," Rivière was subsequently placed in the central house of detention at Beaulieu,[26] rather than in Vastel's Bon Sauveur asylum, this should not be regarded as a negation of such a concept of madness. Rather, it makes more sense to understand it as a strategic means by which caution was exercised in relation to monomania, because of the negative effects upon the justice system that threatened to accompany any unequivocal and *overt* endorsement of the legitimacy of this form of insanity.[27]

Yet, despite this, homicidal monomania would later be explicitly recognized; in short, as Foucault outlines in "About the Concept of the Dangerous Individual," it was defined as a form of madness that emerged spontaneously to usurp the autonomy of even the most

19th Century, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), 229. As Robert Castel explains in "The Doctors and Judges," J. C. E. Vastel was in charge of the Bon Sauveur asylum, to which Rivière stood to be sent if he was found to be insane. Castel, "The Doctors and Judges," 258.

[25] Jean Persil, "Report to His Majesty the King by the Minister of Justice" (1836), in *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), 166–169.

[26] Lhomedé Le Blanc, "Body Receipt by the Head Warden of the Central Prison" (1840), in *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, ed. Michel Foucault (London: Random House, 1982), 170.

[27] In this regard, Fontana, in "The Intermittences of Rationality," thematizes the earlier opposition to any widespread official recognition of monomania, which derived largely from the fear that such recognition would significantly jeopardize the maintenance of social order. Fontana, "The Intermittences of Rationality," 277–278.

previously reasonable and placid person—in a way that could neither be anticipated nor averted—after which it was said to disappear as mysteriously as it had appeared, leaving no traceable behavioral patterns whatsoever in its wake.[28] However, through positing the existence of such homicidal monomania, which one cannot hope to control because one remains for the most part unaware of it, psychiatric authorities did more than merely advance a completely spurious illness.[29] That is, through doing so, they not only facilitated the further development of the eighteenth century myths of madness as something against which the practice of autonomy and self-restraint was useless. In addition, as Foucault explains in "The Confession of the Flesh," they also thereby advanced psychiatry as the only possible means of defending society in the future against this recently identified aberration, which effectively enabled the psychiatrist's ostensible sagacity to grow to the point where it threatened the power of the judge.[30]

At this point, though, juridical authorities appear to have made a somewhat *conciliatory move*, in the interest of establishing a situation of compromise that could facilitate a more even distribution of power and, concomitantly, the muting (rather than the silencing) of the antagonism between themselves and psychiatric authorities. That is, as Foucault suggests in "About the Concept of the Dangerous Individual," although most magistrates initially rejected the validity of monomania, subsequently they slowly but surely began to accommodate themselves to this notion, both through progressively conceding to its veracity, and, following on from this, through increasingly thematizing its potential association with delinquency.[31] Evidence that such transformation was already underway after the case of Pierre Rivière is reflected in the fact that, as Castel indicates in "The Doctors and Judges," committal by judicial warrant was introduced in terms of the law of 1838, which facilitated the hasty confinement of those deemed dangerously mad in the broadest possible sense—even prior to either their perpetration of any actual crime or their certification as insane by a psychiatrist. Admittedly, though, because release from such custody was conditional on the detainee in question obtaining a certificate of recovery from a psychiatrist, society was still forced to rely almost entirely on

---

[28] Foucault, "About the Concept of the Dangerous Individual," 180–181.
[29] Ibid., 182.
[30] Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," 205.
[31] Foucault, "About the Concept of the Dangerous Individual," 185–186.

the sagacity of the latter.[32] Nevertheless, the existence of committal by judicial warrant clearly indicates the way in which juridical authorities, instead of negating the validity of psychiatry, responded by co-opting the myths of madness of the latter for the purpose of extending their *own* power. In fact, as Foucault maintains in "The Confession of the Flesh," psychiatrists were increasingly accommodated within penal institutions around this time, in a way that facilitated greater collaboration between juridical and psychiatric authorities.[33] However, arguably, while such collaboration extended the power of the former no less than it did the power of the latter, this was only afforded through the exponential intensification of the subordinating technologies which surrounded the prisoner.

Indeed, while juridical authorities and psychiatric authorities negotiated with each other in the above manner, the subjects within disciplinary/bio-power society in general, no less than those subjects within penitentiaries, felt the effects of such discursive tussles. In particular, their subjectivity became informed by both the new technology which emerged from such struggles, and the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption that underpinned it; that is, by secularized/medicalized confession which deferred constantly to the authority of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth. Admittedly, on account of the specificity of homicidal monomania, this form of madness could not readily function as a *regular* part of everyday life within the broad context of disciplinary/bio-power society. Rather, it required significant modification before it could do so, and sex, owing both to its generality and to the status it had recently acquired through bio-power and the deployment of sexuality, quickly determined the nature of such modification. In short, as Foucault explains in his article "The History of Sexuality," while sex and madness became increasingly indissociable from the nineteenth century onward, as a result of such imbrication, the latter was both surreptitiously transformed into something increasingly dynamic and complex, and concomitantly spread out across the entire social body, where it not only shed its erstwhile *marginal* status but also lost its previously negative connotations. That is, madness, once it had become imbricated with sex, assumed the form of an intriguingly rich and enigmatic *general* phenomenon, about which a great deal could be

[32] Castel, "The Doctors and Judges," 268–269.
[33] Foucault, "The Confession of the Flesh," 206, 209.

said, and through which, in virtue of such a proliferation of statements, a great deal of power could be exercised.[34]

Arguably, in relation to this, an ambiguous tenor had already begun to surround *certain* aspects of bio-power and the deployment of sexuality in the late eighteenth century. This is because, as Foucault points out in *Abnormal*, there existed a tendency toward a somewhat slavish reliance on medical practitioners to translate families' inarticulate experience of the sexuality they discovered in their midst, into a rational, cogent and scientifically admissible discourse.[35] Following on from this, forms of secularized/medicalized confession, particularly in the nineteenth century, increasingly came to differ from any previous process of 'reporting back' to the medical authorities, which had necessarily been predicated on the rational autonomy of the population in order for their testimonies to constitute valid points of reference. That is, although these new forms of secularized/medicalized confession continued to be informed by many of the discursive dynamics of pastoral power, they also progressively negated the idea that subjects possess the capacity for self-decipherment, which had constituted a cornerstone of pastoral power. Understandably, in doing so, they divested such subjects of the capacity to exercise rational autonomy in perpetuity. In many ways, this reached its apogee both in the broadening of the hermeneutic dynamics that informed the recourse to writing, utilized within the asylum and the courtroom in relation to homicidal monomania,[36] and in the concomitant extension of the psychiatrist's interpretative sagacity to include analyses of the everyday speech of apparently ordinary and sane individuals. This occurred most saliently through the pervasive implementation within disciplinary/bio-power society of a methodological approach to the supposed quiet madness lurking within all individuals. In terms of this approach, it was advanced that individuals were condemned to remain blind to such quiet madness, which was said to linger behind, or on the periphery of, their confessions, until such a time as its truth was revealed to them by an analyst, through the latter's careful distillation of it from the initial confused dross of their words (*HS*, 65–67). As such, from this point onward, psychiatrists, whose elevated status had been inadvertently constructed through a series of discursive struggles with

---

[34] Foucault, "The History of Sexuality," 185.
[35] Foucault, *Abnormal*, 251.
[36] See note 23 above.

juridical authorities, were quite literally given license to distill, from the arbitrary sentiments and associations confessed to them, the supposed distant rumbling echoes of interminable forms of madness, to which those who confessed were said to remain largely deaf. Understandably, this process required immense sensitivity on the part of psychiatrists—a sensitivity that bordered even on sagacity—and their task was beset by immense difficulties and moments of utterly frustrating perplexity, not least because it involved a futile yet never-ending pursuit and interrogation of phantoms (*HS*, 159). Nevertheless, in the absence of any genealogical appraisal of the arising of the edifice of psychiatry, the discursive dynamics of such forms of secularized/medicalized confession were progressively instantiated within disciplinary/bio-power society, so much so that the logic which underpinned them became regarded as something self-evident, and hence non-negotiable, rather than as something highly suspect. The effect that this has had on contemporary subjectivity has been enormous.

That is, on the one hand, such forms of secularized/medicalized confession advanced that the subject could not exercise rational autonomy in perpetuity, and did so against the backdrop of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately had to defer authority. However, on the other hand, as discussed in the previous chapter, at the same time, the disciplinary technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier and panopticism required the subject to exercise more rational autonomy than ever before, in relation to the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity. Moreover, while the bio-power technologies associated with the deployment of sexuality demanded a relative exercise of rational autonomy from subjects, they did so in relation to yet another transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption, namely the idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth. Consequently, contemporary Western society has become infused with tension not only because of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies that simultaneously advance conflicting concepts of autonomy, but also because of the concomitant incongruity between the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions, all of which, in effect, constitutes contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict.

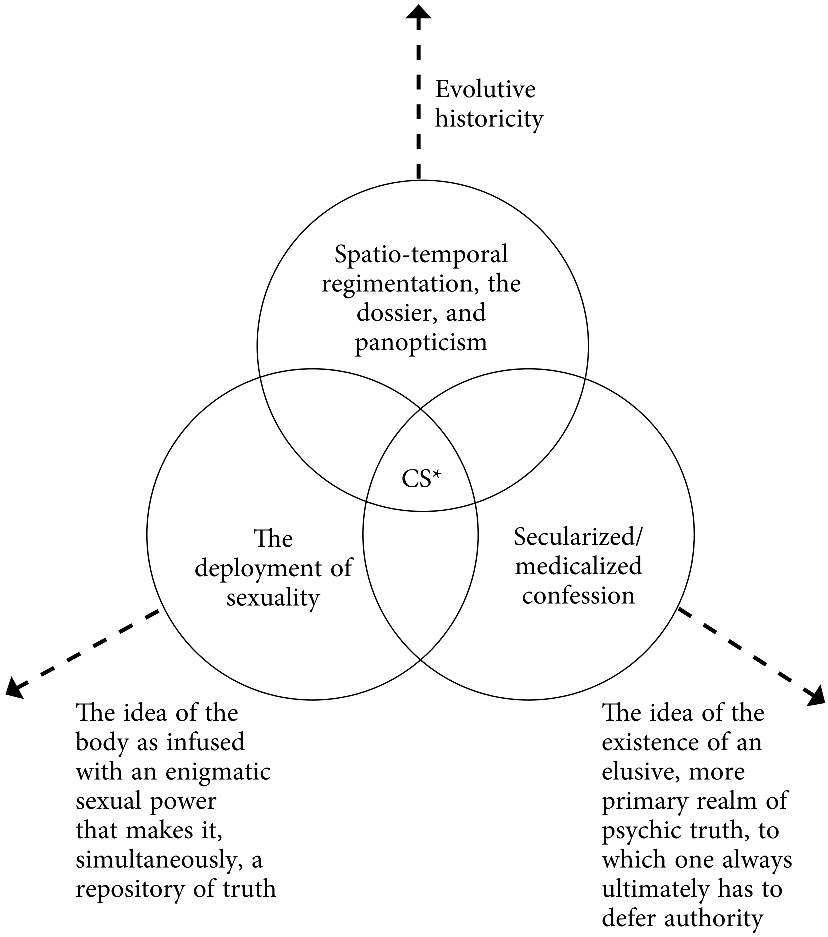


Figure 1 The role of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions in the constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict

* Contemporary subjectivity.

Table 1 Disciplinary/bio-power technologies, their means of exercise, their transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, and their conflicting concepts of autonomy

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Means of exercise	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Concept of autonomy
Spatial regimentation*	This technology is exercised through the principles of enclosure, partitioning, functional sites, and rank	Evolutive historicity	The individual as absolutely capable of exercising autonomy in perpetuity
Temporal regimentation*	This technology is exercised through the principles of the disciplinary timetable, the temporal elaboration of the act, the correlation of the body and the gesture, the body-object articulation, and exhaustive use	Evolutive historicity	The individual as absolutely capable of exercising autonomy in perpetuity
The dossier	This technology is exercised through the inscription of negative judgments that detail the individual's illegitimate activity or failure to act	Evolutive historicity	The individual as absolutely capable of exercising autonomy in perpetuity
Panopticism	This technology is exercised through surveillance that constantly monitors the individual's illegitimate activity or failure to act	Evolutive historicity	The individual as absolutely capable of exercising autonomy in perpetuity
The deployment of sexuality	This technology is exercised via four anchorage points, which function in a manner akin to a mirror, insofar as they not only instantaneously present to individuals an ostensible reflection of their hitherto unrecognized nature, but also thereby allow them to become increasingly and irremediably mesmerized by the ensuing illusion of supposed likeness	The idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth	The individual as relatively capable of exercising autonomy in perpetuity

Table 1 (*cont.*)

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Means of exercise	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Concept of autonomy
Secularized/ medicalized confession	This technology is exercised through a proliferation of imperatives to confess	The idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately has to defer authority	The individual as incapable of exercising autonomy in perpetuity

* Within the current work, once the disciplinary technologies of spatial regimentation and temporal regimentation have been explored separately, for the sake of brevity, these two technologies are subsequently referred to in combination as the disciplinary technology of *spatio-temporal regimentation*.

PART II

A REAPPRAISAL OF WESTERN INTEREST IN TIBET AND VAJRAYĀNA BUDDHISM

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BLANK CANVAS OF TIBET

Arguably, the experience, on the part of subjects within disciplinary/bio-power society, of the form of discursive tension discussed in the previous section, became so acute that it began to motivate their growing interest in domains outside of the Western disciplinary/bio-power environment, which were regarded as valuable insofar as they were believed to be devoid of such tension. To a certain extent, the emergence of Orientalism in the West bears testimony to such a growing interest. That is, as Edward Said advances in *Orientalism*, on the one hand, Orientalism is predicated on the legitimacy of dividing the globe into the more or less mutually exclusive domains of the Occident and the Orient, which, in turn, is underpinned by a belief in an ontological and epistemological disparity between the cultures of the former and the cultures of the latter—a disparity that, accordingly, has rendered them irreducibly different in orientation. However, on the other hand, it was only during the latter part of the eighteenth century that Orientalism really emerged as an increasingly cohesive and powerful discursive apparatus that sought to both establish the parameters of the Orient and to identify, define and categorize its internal rhythms.[1] Admittedly, to a certain degree, Orientalism can thus be understood as a further extension of disciplinary/bio-power, insofar as it involved an attempt to map and define those spaces that resided outside of the disciplinary/bio-power domain, in the interest of bringing them under control. However, arguably, to understand Orientalism *solely* in such terms would be particularly myopic, especially when it is remembered that many of the discourses produced by Western subjects on the Orient did little to render this foreign space manageable, but rather, on the contrary, imbued it with mystical elements that defied all attempts at definition. Indeed, this latter tendency on the part of Western subjects is of interest precisely because it indicates efforts to resist disciplinary/bio-power discursive 'imperialism,' both through characterizing the Orient

[1] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1978), 2–3.

as valuable because it *lacks* disciplinary/bio-power discursive features, and through emphasizing the way in which its dynamism *opposes* the imposition of such features. Three texts, in particular, bear testimony to the development of such resistance, namely Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*, John Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*, and Anagarika Govinda's autobiographical *The Way of the White Clouds*, and each of these texts will be explored, respectively, in the following three chapters. However, before embarking on such exploration, it will be valuable to elaborate, albeit briefly, upon the broad context within which these three works emerged.

The basic elements of the history of Western interest in Tibet are by now relatively well-known. As Michael Hoffman and his colleagues point out in *Tibet: The Sacred Realm*, Western involvement with Tibet dates back at least as far as the early seventeenth century. In short, the first Westerner officially allowed into Tibet was a Jesuit missionary, who arrived there in 1624 and attempted to organize missions at Tsaparang and Shigatse, both of which were dissolved in 1635. In 1661, two more Jesuits traveled as far as Lhasa and were followed by Capuchins in 1708, who succeeded in establishing a mission in Lhasa until 1745, the closure of which, in effect, heralded the cessation of all Catholic missionary endeavors in that country. After this, for the remainder of the eighteenth century and for the whole of the nineteenth century—that is, for approximately one hundred and fifty years until Colonel Francis Younghusband's military expedition into Tibet in 1903/1904—only seven other Westerners were allowed to enter the territory.[2] For the most part, Western involvement with Tibet in the run-up to this military expedition occurred against the backdrop of European political tension. That is, as Tsepon Shakabpa advances in *Tibet: A Political History*, political tension between Britain and Russia (originating from the earlier Crimean War) ultimately underpinned the Younghusband military expedition of 1903/1904, which was undertaken with the express purpose of preventing Russian political and economic influence from taking hold in Tibet. Accordingly, the subsequent 1904 Convention, specifically the ninth article of the Convention, placed immense restrictions on Westerners' access to and interaction with

[2] Michael E. Hoffman et al., *Tibet: The Sacred Realm* (New York: Aperture, 1983), 146–147.

Tibet.[3] However, toward the middle of the twentieth century, the veil appeared ready to fall from the face of Tibet, insofar as, in 1948, a Tibetan Trade Delegation traveled to China, the United States and Britain, as part of a Tibetan government initiative to facilitate Tibet's emergence as an independent nation-state in the eyes of the international community.[4] Arguably, a strong motivation for the above initiative derived from the termination of British colonial rule in India, and the consequent granting of Indian independence in August 1947. That is, not only did Tibet wish to follow suit, so to speak, but the Tibetan government also realized that Indian independence had robbed it of the British protection that it had previously enjoyed, on account of its status as a 'buffer zone' between British and Russian interests in Asia. However, unfortunately, it would appear that Tibetan efforts in this regard were too little and too late, insofar as Tibet was not able to accomplish the mammoth task of integrating itself solidly into the international community, at both economic and political levels, within a brief period of less than two years. Thus, as Shakabpa recalls, when China asserted, in late 1949, that Tibet constituted part of its territory, this declaration was not met by any immense international outcry. Similarly, when Chinese forces marched into Tibet in October 1950, apart from expressions of regret from Britain and India, and a murmur of indignation from El Salvador, there was no vehement support for Tibetan independence, primarily on account of the prevailing notion that Tibet's legal position was ambiguous.[5] This apathy, though, was quite understandable, because while Britain was no longer directly threatened by the Chinese annexation of Tibet, India did not want to inaugurate its independence by engaging in military conflict with China. Similarly, the rest of the world, still bearing the burdensome economic legacy of the Second World War, was simply not interested in going out on a limb for a relative newcomer to the international stage, to whom they owed nothing as yet, and who had yet to prove to be of any value to them.

However, what the above general historical overview does *not* make apparent, are the ways in which each Western action in relation to Tibet was always predicated upon, accompanied by, and succeeded by,

[3] Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa, *Tibet: A Political History* (New York: Potala Publications, 1984), 205, 217–218.

[4] Ibid., 294–297.

[5] Ibid., 299–303.

changing discursive apparatuses, which at different times imbued the relevant actions with the necessary aura of legitimacy. One of the best texts that illustrates the changing nature of such discursive apparatuses is Donald Lopez's *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*, within which the author seems to intimate the existence of as many as four distinct phases of such transformation. Ironically though, from Lopez's work, it appears that at no point during these various phases has Western involvement with Tibet ever been free of a primary preoccupation with the West's *own* problems, with the consequence that Tibet has never really been allowed to reveal its face. Moreover, while the cultural surface of Tibet has consequently served, at different historical periods, to reflect in intriguingly distorted forms the problems of the West, the weighty persistence of the accompanying mesmerized Western gaze has slowly but surely transformed Tibetan culture, such that it has long since been unclear where Western fictions end and the Tibetan reality begins.[6]

According to Lopez, the Western perspective on Tibet that gained in momentum during the seventeenth century, and which served as the discursive apparatus of legitimation for Catholic missionary activity, sought to characterize the Tibetans as a lost people in need of both the guidance of Roman Catholicism and Christian salvation.[7] Yet, in the interest of doing so, this first phase of the discursive apparatus was obliged to account for the fact that the accouterments and practices of the Catholic mass bore an uncanny resemblance to aspects of Tibetan Buddhist ritual.[8] The rather simplistic explanation which subsequently emerged, and in terms of which it was speculated that such similarities were the product of a much earlier and largely forgotten Christian influence, fulfilled a double propaganda function. In short, it not only functioned to co-opt and 'include' those aspects within Tibetan Buddhist ritual which seemed to reflect elements of Christianity, but also provided justification for the derogation and 'exclusion' of any remaining ritualistic aspects, on the basis of their alleged status as inane and hopelessly confused *mutations* of Christianity.[9] Obviously, what this entailed was the increasingly intense mediation of Western involve-

[6] Donald S. Lopez, Jr., *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 1–13.
[7] Ibid., 21–24.
[8] Ibid., 25.
[9] Ibid., 26–28.

ment with Tibet by a discursive apparatus, the origins of which lay in the West, and which sought not to discover its own limits in Tibet, but rather to uncover its own supposed universality, via the separation and subsequent exclusion of Tibetan cultural dross from the purity of its hypothetical Christian heritage.

In turn, following the rise of Protestant power in Europe, this discursive apparatus entered its second phase, which entailed a process whereby Tibetan Buddhist rituals became employed as evidence *against* the validity of Roman Catholic practice, in arguments by Protestants keen on debunking the latter's claims to spiritual superiority. That is, around the middle of the eighteenth century, Protestants began to attack the long-standing monopoly of the Catholic Church on spiritual truth, through pointing out the compromising parallels that exist between the rituals of Tibetan Buddhism and those of Catholicism, and through declaring such equivalence to be incontrovertible evidence of the idolatry inherent in the latter.[10] Ironically, this relied heavily on an inflection of the claims made in terms of the first phase of the discursive apparatus. In other words, many of the parallels painstakingly drawn by Catholics between their own faith and Tibetan Buddhism, in the interest of advancing the universality of their version of Christianity, were now echoed by Protestants as damning evidence of the idolatrous nature of Catholicism, in the interest of advancing the legitimacy (and indeed the universal validity) of Protestantism.[11]

Yet, although, from a historical perspective, such Protestant criticism coincided with the decline of Catholic missionary endeavors in Tibet, mentioned earlier, it would be a mistake to consider such criticism as contributing in any way to the liberation of Tibet from imperialistic pretensions. This is because such criticism, in effect, dovetailed neatly into a different imperialistic agenda, namely that of Britain in relation to its colonial interests in Asia, in a manner that contributed significantly to the military invasion, rather than simply the spiritual invasion, of Tibet. This third phase of the discursive apparatus that mediated Western involvement with Tibet commenced with the criticism of Tibetan Buddhism by British Orientalists, who advanced that its magic, folklore, sacerdotalism, and superstition had robbed it of its status as a living legacy of the historical Buddha; a figure that, as discussed in the

[10] Ibid., 29.
[11] Ibid., 30.

introduction, such Orientalists had by then already mistakenly infused with all of the socio-cultural iconoclasm and philosophical rationalism of the Enlightenment period.[12] Understandably, this view of Tibetan Buddhism as utterly degenerate lent powerful implicit support to the notion that Britain's political domination of Tibet was justified.[13] That is, as long as the Tibetan government was characterized as a desperately corrupt theocracy, any act of British interference in Tibet's domestic and foreign affairs could with relative ease assume the moral high ground, insofar as such a theocracy, from a Western perspective, could neither be expected to effectively administer the affairs of its country in the present, nor be trusted to develop such a capacity in the future.[14]

However, after Indian independence was granted in 1947, the need for Britain to administer Tibet as a buffer zone, between its interests in Asia and the interests of Russia, was dissolved. Consequently, the above third phase of the discursive apparatus was robbed of its political fuel and became both redundant and, over time, subject once more to transformation. Yet, despite the conditions that precipitated it, the following fourth phase of the discursive apparatus was by no means apolitical. This is because, while Tibetan Buddhism, in terms of this fourth phase, became valorized in the 1960s and 1970s as *the* living legacy of the historical Buddha (in diametric opposition to the claims made against it in terms of the earlier third phase),[15] this transformation occurred not only within a unique political context, but also within a distinctive economic context, which made it virtually indissociable from a highly specific politico-economic expression. That is, as Jeremy Carrette and Richard King point out in *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion*, around this time there occurred the increasing commodification of religious traditions,[16] and it was under the auspices of such commodification that renewed Western interest in, and valorization of, Tibetan Buddhism, along with other Asian religions, developed. In short, in terms of this approach, the 'post-modern' Western religious practitioner, in accordance with an individualistic devotional orientation that derived from, among other psychological theories, those of

[12] Ibid., 31–32.
[13] Ibid., 33–36.
[14] Ibid., 40.
[15] Ibid., 42.
[16] Jeremy Carrette and Richard King, *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion* (London: Routledge, 2008), 28.

William James, James Pratt, Gordon Allport and Abraham Maslow,[17] was encouraged to pursue his/her *personal* salvation in a manner that displaced community in the interest of a hyperbolic emphasis on transcendence.[18] As such, what this 'New Age' smorgasbord of spiritual options involved was not only the commercialization (and consequent rarefaction) of the theories and practices of various religious traditions, particularly those that hailed from the 'Orient.'[19] In addition, through such a hyperbolic emphasis on the transcendent orientation of spiritual practice, it also involved the heralding of the privatization of religion as a means of seeking spiritual wisdom more purely and more directly than ever before, in a way that was supposedly unpolluted by politics and economics.[20] The obvious problem with this was that it blatantly ignored the way in which such privatization of religion was itself a capitalist invention that, moreover, served a highly political function, namely the commercialization of all domains of human activity and experience, particularly those that were traditionally incompatible with or hostile to the capitalist *ethos*.[21]

Admittedly, in terms of Western interest in Tibetan Buddhism from the 1960s onward, such privatization was largely camouflaged by the veneer of political activism that clung to it, and that derived from the way in which Westerners were tacitly afforded the opportunity to see in their explicit support of anything Tibetan a small act of resistance against Communist aggression. In this regard, the façade of such resistance functioned as a convenient means of vaguely connecting the transcendent orientation of their private meditative practices with both historico-political reality and a wider anonymous community, in a way that often demanded little more from them than the periodic expression of sympathy and the occasional donation of money or time. Yet, such Western interest in Tibetan Buddhism, informed as it was mostly by bourgeois dilettantism, remained largely inseparable from the above mentioned new approach to spirituality, insofar as, in terms of it, the pursuit of social justice played only a distant second fiddle to a primary concern with pandering to the spiritual tastes of the elite.[22]

[17] Ibid., 69–71.
[18] Ibid., 49–53, 57.
[19] Ibid., 89–90.
[20] Ibid., 68.
[21] Ibid., 49, 63.
[22] Ibid., 71.

All three of the texts mentioned earlier, namely Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*, John Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*, and Anagarika Govinda's autobiographical *The Way of the White Clouds*, emerged within the context of, and as part of, this fourth phase of the discursive apparatus that mediated Western involvement with Tibet. Indeed, in this regard, all three texts constitute veritable blueprints of the discursive dynamics of this fourth phase, insofar as even a cursory glance at their content reveals them to be systematically representative of *all* of the salient dynamics of this phase. As such, at this point in time, and particularly after Lopez's exhaustive treatment, in *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, of Rampa's *The Third Eye*,[23] it would be rather superfluous either to analyze this text, along with the remaining two texts, in terms of such dynamics, or to seek in them evidence for the existence of such dynamics. This is simply because, while the former endeavor would amount to little more than an exercise in stating the obvious, the latter endeavor could not significantly complement the already powerful argument made by Lopez.

Yet, the existence of Lopez's argument is indicative of the development of an additional *fifth* phase of the discursive apparatus that mediates Western involvement with Tibet, namely one which has begun to look back critically at the discursive products of the fourth phase. That is, arguably, Lopez's *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, along with earlier works such as Peter Bishop's *Dreams of Power: Tibetan Buddhism and the Western Imagination*, and later works such as Hugh Urban's *Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics, and Power in the Study of Religion*, and, for that matter, Carrette and King's *Selling Spirituality*, discussed above, in virtue of their critical stance toward the discursive products of the fourth phase, all belong to this additional fifth phase. It is within this fifth phase that the current work is also situated, and it develops specifically upon the increasingly Foucaultian orientation of the above mentioned critical texts.

In short, this fifth phase, instead of being orientated around increasing intoxication with the exotic mysticism of the East, in a manner akin to the fourth phase, is orientated far more around a circumspect appraisal of such mysticism, in the light of, among other things, recent discourse analysis, postcolonial theory and economic insights. Indeed, in certain

[23] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 86–113.

respects, this fifth phase not only appears to eschew the myopic and over-enthusiastic valorization of the religious traditions of the East, on the part of the fourth phase, but also seems orientated around undoing the discursive entanglements and confusions that are the product of the excesses of its predecessor. This much is hinted at, for example, in Lopez's explanation that his *Prisoners of Shangri-La* constitutes one possible critical tool with which an escape from the discursive prison of Tibetan Buddhism can finally be begun.[24] In many ways, this suggestion, on the part of Lopez, echoes Peter Bishop's earlier critical emphasis on the darkly political, rather than enlightened spiritual, function of the iconic representation of the 'Lineage Tree' within the Karma Kagyüpa school of Vajrayāna Buddhism—that is, Bishop's (post-fourth phase) disillusioning thematization, in *Dreams of Power*, of the 'hidden agenda' of the Lineage Tree as a psychically and politically incarcerating representation of non-negotiable spiritual and social hierarchies.[25] In addition, while Lopez's thematization, in *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, of the Dalai Lama's role in the lesser known Shugden controversy,[26] resonates deeply with the critical tenor of Urban's later appraisal, in *Tantra*, of the less flattering and often unacknowledged aspects of, among others, the Karma Kagyüpa Lama Chogyam Trungpa,[27] similarly, Lopez's account of the Western history of the infamous *Tibetan Book of the Dead*,[28] in certain respects, involves a narrative version of the development and politics of Western psycho-spirituality elaborated upon by Carrette and King in *Selling Spirituality*.[29]

However, in contrast to Bishop's *Dreams of Power*, which is written from a Jungian perspective, Lopez's *Prisoners of Shangri-La* is made up largely of a series of genealogical analyses of those features of Tibetan Buddhism with which Westerners are familiar. In this regard, what Lopez recalls are their lesser known bizarre and often accidental origins, along with the recent but quickly forgotten partisan inflections to which they have been subject, before they became molded into the various current forms in which they have been embraced by credulous

---

[24] Ibid., 13.
[25] Peter Bishop, *Dreams of Power: Tibetan Buddhism and the Western Imagination* (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), 122–123.
[26] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 188–196.
[27] Hugh B. Urban, *Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics, and Power in the Study of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 231–235.
[28] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 46–85.
[29] Carrette and King, *Selling Spirituality*, 54–86.

Westerners—as the ostensibly authentic products of an *unbroken* tradition. Although Lopez does not refer specifically to Foucault, Urban couches his own approach to Tantra in explicitly Foucaultian terms, with a direct reference to Foucault's "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" that, in many ways, could easily serve as a very accurate description of Lopez's genealogical method.[30] Moreover, while Foucault's analyses of the discursive dynamics of the deployment of sexuality, in *The Will to Knowledge*, feature significantly in the conceptual architecture of Urban's text,[31] Urban also concludes his work by grounding it in Foucaultian discourse analysis, rather than in the realm of transcendent speculation. That is, in addition to advancing the importance of Jeremy Carrette's *Foucault and Religion: Spiritual Corporality and Political Spirituality*, Urban asserts that in the light of Foucault's work, Tantric traditions should henceforth be regarded first and foremost as socio-political expressions that are geared toward effecting change in *this* world, rather than as religious practices that are orientated exclusively around facilitating 'other-worldly' transformations.[32] Similarly, although Carrette and King's *Selling Spirituality* is focused on the commodification of spirituality under the increasingly powerful spell of neoliberalism, a Foucaultian orientation informs their work not only implicitly, through their various genealogical approaches to contemporary 'psycho-spirituality,' but also explicitly, via their use of Foucault's perspectives as a theoretical backdrop.[33]

As is evident from the previous three chapters, the above growing Foucaultian orientation has been privileged even more in the current work. That is, in this work, Foucault's analyses of discursive developments within the West have not been employed as part of a strategy to engage critically with the consumerist orientation of contemporary capitalist society. Instead, they have been examined in an effort to understand the *source* of Westerners' dissatisfaction with the con-

[30] The reference in question involves an emphasis on the importance of relinquishing the pursuit of an underlying historical continuity upon which to base theories of 'progress.' This is because the acceptance of the largely accidental nature of history, and the thematization of the overwhelming evidence of its lack of an enduring *telos*, allows, in turn, for the problematization and re-evaluation of all cultural elements; in particular, those that derive their legitimacy from such myths of 'progress,' and which otherwise wield so much power over us because we attach so much importance to them. Urban, *Tantra*, 13.

[31] Ibid., 56, 58.

[32] Ibid., 274.

[33] Carrette and King, *Selling Spirituality*, 30, 61, 164, 172.

temporary discursive terrain, in a manner that regards power rather than economics as primary. In this way, the current work operates in the wake of Foucault's contention, in "Power and Sex," that while the reduction of politics to economics remains a valid initial step to take, if one fails to proceed further, to an examination of the configurations of power that constitute and underpin the economic relations thus identified, one simply allows such configurations to continue operating covertly as powerful determining factors.[34] In short, while Bishop, in *Dreams of Power*, points out that enduring and pervasive discontent with the features and dynamics of Western civilization has, in many cases, precipitated Westerners' embrace of Tibetan Buddhism as a religio-philosophic practice,[35] in the following three chapters of the current work, and against the backdrop of the preceding three chapters, an effort will be made to account for such dissatisfaction from a Foucaultian point of view.

As already discussed, according to Foucault, power never simply denies something without inadvertently creating something else,[36] and the annexation of Tibet by the Chinese in 1950 is a case in point. That is, although it resulted in even more stringent restrictions on Western access to that country than had previously existed in terms of the 1904 Convention, it also gave rise to the idea of Tibet as a *blank canvas*. Figuratively speaking, upon this canvas and in various ways, Westerners proceeded to paint an imaginary world, the validity of which it was difficult to controvert both because of restricted access to Tibet, and because that which was depicted could always be said to have been true of Tibet *before* it became subject to the Chinese programs of modernization that began in the 1950s.[37] However, despite the respective talents

[34] Michel Foucault, "Power and Sex" (1977), in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977–1984*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1990), 118–119.

[35] Bishop, *Dreams of Power*, 17–18.

[36] See note 11, Chapter Three.

[37] As detailed by the Union Research Institute in *Tibet 1950–1967*, such modernization was, in effect, guaranteed in terms of the seventeen point agreement signed between China and Tibet in May 1951, and was principally carried out through a significant expansion of Tibet's industrial and commercial sectors. In order to accelerate such a process of expansion, a great deal of attention was subsequently paid both to the improvement of transportation in the country—via the construction of a network of highways and roads—and to the steady enhancement of Tibet's electricity generating capacity. A similar strategic approach to agriculture saw annual yields progressively increase to levels never before imagined by the Tibetans. Finally, over and above these developments, the medical facilities in Tibet both increased in number and improved in

of the Western artists in question, which in many cases were quite considerable, these artists all appear to have been limited to various degrees by the colors at their disposal, on account of the disciplinary/bio-power tones of the latter. As such, although Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*, John Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*, and Anagarika Govinda's autobiographical *The Way of the White Clouds* all take Tibet and Vajrayāna Buddhism as the backdrop to their respective narratives, a critical examination of the discursive dynamics at work in these texts reveals each to be pervaded by a deep ambivalence toward disciplinary/bio-power society. Indeed, so marked is this ambivalence that the narratives of these three texts, for the most part, say more about the constitution of Western subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict than they do about anything else.

However, importantly, what follows should not be construed as an exercise in pointing out any shortcomings of the above mentioned three texts. On the contrary, because the current work approaches all three of these texts as products of historico-discursive circumstances, it seeks only to thematize the different ways in which each either simply reflects, or tacitly reflects upon, the discursive conditions under which it was produced. As such, the current work is thereby also mercifully spared of the difficult task of commenting on, or taking sides in, any of the controversial debates that have surrounded the above mentioned three authors and their respective works, and which have derived from questions concerning, among other things, authorial authenticity and inconsistency with Buddhist doctrine.

Instead, the focus of each of the following three chapters falls on the extent to which the five main technologies of disciplinary/bio-power discussed in the preceding three chapters, namely the regimentation of space and time, the dossier, panopticism, the deployment of sexuality and secularized/medicalized confession, along with their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, are reflected in or reflected upon within, the narratives of Rampa's, Blofeld's and

---

quality, while literacy among the Tibetan people was boosted through the establishment of a wide array of primary, secondary and tertiary education centers. Union Research Institute, *Tibet 1950–1967* (Hong Kong: Union Press Ltd., 1968), 19–23, 54–55, 60, 133, 263, 290, 441, 444, 589–590, 713, 715.

Govinda's respective texts.[38] Admittedly, none of the three authors succeed in identifying the source of their discursive 'suffering,' that is, as arising both from the coexistence within disciplinary/bio-power society of different technologies that advance disparate concepts of autonomy, and from the concomitant incongruity between the divergent transcendent orientations of the respective implicit founding assumptions of these technologies. However, each of the three authors, nevertheless, either implicitly or explicitly, exhibits discontent with one or more of the above mentioned five disciplinary/bio-power technologies, insofar as they either surreptitiously invert their dynamics or overtly question their validity. As such, on account of the historical indissociability of each technology from the other four, in terms of which a thematization of one necessarily hints at a tacit awareness of the others, it is conceivable that all three authors may well have intuited, at least at some level, the role of such disciplinary/bio-power technologies in the creation of the above mentioned discursive 'suffering,' even if they remained incapable of explicitly formulating the connections between them. Yet, as will be discussed, even though, from Rampa's through Blofeld's to Govinda's respective texts, an increasing *approximation* of discursive transgression against disciplinary/bio-power occurs, arguably, no *enduringly* successful discursive transgression ever takes place. This is because, even when successful discursive transgression occurs, the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions evidently continue to inform the subjectivity of the author in question. What this suggests, in turn, is the possibility that the primary issue underpinning each author's enduring interest in Tibet and Vajrayāna Buddhism was not the experience of any doctrine of transmigration as unbearable, which underpins 'traditional' Buddhism, but rather the experience of the way in which their subjectivity, through disciplinary/bio-power, continued to be informed as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict.

This is significant because the above mentioned three literary figures and their respective works all emerged at the moment when the Western

[38] Although the disciplinary division of virtual space in terms of rank was also discussed in the previous section, it will not be explicitly focused upon in what follows. This is because of the way in which, through writing from a privileged position within their respective exotic domains of choice, all three authors obviously instantiate themselves in particularly high categories within their chosen networks of classificatory relations, in a manner that clearly inverts, and thereby compensates for, their former relatively humble status within the disciplinary/bio-power domain.

fascination with Tibet and Vajrayāna Buddhism was driven to greater intensity than ever before by the convergence of two things—firstly, the Chinese annexation of Tibet, which was accompanied by intensified restrictions on Western access to that country, and secondly, the redundancy of the third phase of the discursive apparatus that had previously mediated Western interest in Tibet, and in terms of which Vajrayāna Buddhism, in the interest of political expediency, had been regarded in a negative light. As such, Rampa's, Blofeld's and Govinda's respective texts are important not only because they went on, with considerable success, to inform popular Western perceptions of Vajrayāna Buddhism specifically, and along with this, much of the tenor of contemporary Western Buddhism in general. In addition, they are also important because they provide invaluable insights into the discursive issues to which the appropriation of Buddhism in the contemporary West is a response, but to which it has yet to learn *how* to respond.

CHAPTER FIVE

LOBSANG RAMPA'S *THE THIRD EYE: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A TIBETAN LAMA*

It is difficult to attribute the mammoth acclaim of Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama* to its presentation of Vajrayāna Buddhist philosophy to a Western public hungry for such knowledge, because the philosophy proffered via the text constitutes only a marginal portion of its narrative content. However, it is, perhaps, possible to understand the prodigious popular appeal of the work as deriving less from its attempt to rearticulate Buddhist philosophy, and more from its mirroring of certain of the narrative elements characteristic of Ian Fleming's *James Bond* novels. This becomes less surprising when it is recalled that, as Michael Denning points out in "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," although Fleming's first *Bond* novel emerged in 1953, the *Bond* phenomenon only commenced around 1957, with the mass publication of both *Casino Royale* and *From Russia, With Love*, after which it started to approximate its current form.[1] That is, this timing makes the emergence of the *Bond* phenomenon contemporaneous with that of the 'Rampa' phenomenon. However, this is neither to suggest that the American paperback revolution, which emerged in Britain with the advent of the *Bond* novels,[2] simply provided Rampa's texts with a wave upon which they conveniently caught a ride, nor to suggest that Rampa's texts were consciously modeled on *Bond* narratives. Rather, in terms of the approach outlined in the previous chapter, what is being advanced is that, as literary products of the same historico-discursive circumstances, certain parallels exist between the narratives of Rampa's texts and the *Bond* novels, and that the thematization of such parallels provides potentially valuable insights into the nature of the discursive discontent to which both constituted a response.

---

[1] Michael Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption" (1987), in *Contemporary Marxist Literary Criticism*, ed. F. Mulhern (Singapore: Longman Group U.K. Ltd., 1992), 212.

[2] Ibid., 212–213.

In short, like *Bond* novels, Rampa's texts allow contemporary subjects a figurative, temporary and partial respite from the discursive tension of the disciplinary/bio-power domain, via an imaginative inversion of the dynamics that inform the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies, all of which, in effect, affords readers the experience of exercising the power to which they are usually subject. This respite is figurative because, in a manner akin to the *Bond* novels, Rampa's texts, albeit vicariously, provide contemporary subjects with, firstly, the opportunity to enjoy regimenting space and organizing time within an exotic domain; secondly, the opportunity to efface the individualizing process of the dossier; thirdly, the chance to gain access to the equivalent of the central tower of a Panopticon situated within such an exotic domain; fourthly, the chance to proclaim a new day of sexual freedom; and fifthly, the occasion to interrogate the residents of the exotic domain in question in the interest of obtaining from them ever more authentic cultural confessions. Yet, as such, while this respite can only ever be temporary, insofar as its duration is limited to the length of the narrative in question, it can also only ever be partial, because of the way in which its inversion of the dynamics of the above mentioned five disciplinary/bio-power technologies leaves the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions thoroughly intact.

Firstly, both the readers of *Bond* novels and those of *The Third Eye* are granted similar vicarious opportunities to regiment space and organize time within the exotic domains in which their respective narratives unfold. With regard to the regimentation of space, in Fleming's *From Russia, With Love*, for example, Bond's enjoyment of a spectacular morning view from his hotel room is vividly described, as his eyes travel from right to left and take in not only the architectural features of the exotic city in which he finds himself, but also the surrounding natural splendor, before his thoughts begin to gravitate idly around an evaluation of his choice of accommodation.[3] As Denning argues, the above description reflects the quintessential tourist experience, in terms of which an existing social/natural domain is reduced to the level of an object, which can either be construed as an aesthetic whole or have its space regimented according to tourist criteria that remain entirely foreign both to it and to the modes of interaction that facilitate

[3] Ian Fleming, *From Russia, With Love* (St. Albans: Triad Panther, 1977), 99.

existence within it.[4] Yet, all of this is similarly mirrored in Rampa's description, in *The Third Eye*, of his birthday in Lhasa, during which he not only remained at leisure in his room, but also, more importantly, detailed his view from its windows in a manner akin to Bond. That is, analogously, his eyes traveled from the intriguing architecture of the landmark buildings in front of him, to the natural splendor behind him, before his thoughts began to gravitate idly around an evaluation of time spent in this manner.[5] Indeed, Rampa not only regiments and subdivides the space of Lhasa, on the basis of aesthetic criteria utterly alien to the modes of interaction that facilitate existence within it. In addition, he also exhibits significant resistance to any attempt whatsoever to limit him, within the context of Lhasa, to mundane spaces and the ordinary daily activities that take place therein. Arguably, the most glaring example of this is his imposition of his own wishes over those of the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet, when he rejects the Dalai Lama's pedagogic recommendations in favor of remaining under the tutorship of Lama Mingyar Dondup (*TTE*, 112–113). Moreover, this does not really involve an act of submission, on Rampa's part, to Mingyar Dondup, which threatens to limit Rampa to the lonely activity of solitary meditation within a gloomy monastic cell. Rather, what emerges into conspicuousness is that Rampa favors Mingyar Dondup precisely because he constitutes less of a *spiritual* guide and more of a *tour* guide, as evinced by the way in which he serves little purpose other than as a traveling commentator for Rampa as the young man wanders through the Potala.

In turn, it is particularly in relation to such wanderings that the organization of time within the narrative of *The Third Eye* emerges as relaxed rather than exhaustively utilitarian in orientation. That is, just as Bond's various travel itineraries, although synonymous with his various missions—insofar as they facilitate his meetings with other characters—always allow time for what Denning variously describes as consumer leisure activities,[6] so too, Rampa's time appears to be organized for him around the principle of an unhurried tourist economy.

[4] Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," 221.

[5] T. Lobsang Rampa, *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1957), 99.

[6] Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," 218.

This much is apparent both from the itinerary of his trip to the Potala, and from, among other things, his various tours within and beneath the Potala, all of which are not only prearranged for his pleasure and aesthetic/cultural advancement, but also directed for him at a very modest pace (*TTE*, 106, 118–121). As such, through this, the readers of *The Third Eye*, in much the same way as the readers of the various *Bond* novels, are afforded the vicarious opportunity of having time organized around them, instead of themselves being organized around an ever more exhaustively utilitarian appropriation of time, as is the norm within disciplinary/bio-power society.[7]

Secondly, as Denning advances in "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," the initial popularity of the character of Bond derived from the way in which he reflected a broad array of personality traits that made it easy for males of many different ages, and from all manner of socio-cultural and economic backgrounds, to identify with him *simultaneously*.[8] In this regard, Bond arguably constituted a cipher into which they could project themselves in a way that facilitated their effacement of their origins,[9] all of which was afforded through, and sanctioned by, the emerging ornamental culture of the period.[10] The character of Lobsang Rampa owed his genesis largely to

[7] Arguably, an augmented capacity to move about freely within space and time, and to obtain optimum tourist vantages, constitutes a central thematic element throughout much of Rampa's work. That is, in *Doctor from Lhasa*, Rampa is not only afforded spectacular views of China and Tibet, but is also able to traverse all mundane spatio-temporal boundaries relatively unencumbered through the process of astral traveling. T. Lobsang Rampa, *Doctor from Lhasa* (London: Corgi Books, 1965), 74–75, 84, 86–87, 109, 111–112. Similarly, in *The Cave of the Ancients*, in addition to viewing Lhasa and the surrounding area from privileged positions, Rampa is also afforded a secret tourist perspective of religious rituals. Moreover, in this text, astral travel not only spares Rampa of the agony of a collision with actual spatial barriers, but also allows him to circumvent spatial restrictions on the basis of rank. T. Lobsang Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients* (London: Corgi Books, 1972), 9–10, 18, 25, 129–131, 136. Again, while in *Wisdom of the Ancients*, the various dimensions of the latter phenomenon are elaborated upon specifically, in *The Hermit* something akin to this phenomenon receives relatively significant thematization. T. Lobsang Rampa, *Wisdom of the Ancients* (London: Corgi Books, 1966), 15–16; and T. Lobsang Rampa, *The Hermit* (London: Corgi Books, 1971), 104–105, 113, 120). Furthermore, in *Tibetan Sage*, all of the above is, in many ways, augmented exponentially through the introduction of the possibility of exploring other dimensions. T. Lobsang Rampa, *Tibetan Sage* (London: Corgi Books, 1980), 110–111.

[8] Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," 213.

[9] Ibid., 214–215.

[10] See note 8, Introduction.

such possibilities, insofar as the relative success of Cyril Henry Hoskins's endeavor to efface his origins can be attributed to, among other things, the new value with which the mediating image became invested in terms of such ornamental culture. That is, on the back cover of the early editions of *The Third Eye*, in the strategy employed to market the text, and in the infamous series of newspaper articles that, some fifteen months after the publication of the book, rendered the text and its author unforgettably controversial, the same image confronted readers with noticeable regularity. It was a black and white photograph of a shaven-headed man, with an aquiline nose and neatly trimmed beard, dressed in a robe and kneeling in meditation or prayer, with hands twisted in the form of a *mudra*. As such, through this photograph, Lobsang Rampa (Cyril Henry Hoskins) was represented as thoroughly Western rather than Tibetan, notwithstanding both the subtitle of *The Third Eye*, which advances the text as the autobiography of a *Tibetan* Lama, and the opening words of the author's preface, which make a similar declaration (*TTE*, 9). Yet, amazingly, this was generally construed as a relatively insignificant detail which could simply be glossed over. Moreover, the immense *popular* support for Hoskins's creation of a new identity for himself *as* Lobsang Rampa—through the adoption of the right 'hairstyle,' garments and posture, and through allowing for the proliferation of photographic images of himself as such—is strongly evinced by the fact that the disclosure of his alleged prevarication in February 1958 did little to halt demand for *The Third Eye*. On the contrary, not only did the book continue to sell prolifically, but Hoskins, *as* Lobsang Rampa, went on to successfully complete twenty three other books before his death, in Canada, in 1981, where in the years preceding his demise he had ensconced himself in the role of guru at his *ashram* in Calgary.[11]

In terms of the approach of the current work, however, Hoskins's avowed reasons for the above are of little consequence; instead, the primary question concerns the reason behind the popular support for such effacement of origins, which emerged simultaneously in relation to both the character of Bond and the character of Lobsang Rampa.

[11] Actually, in the case of Lobsang Rampa, there exists a further intricacy, insofar as, in the author's preface to *The Third Eye*, Rampa also declares that he has been obliged to conceal his *real* identity, and cites dire political consequences that would ensue from its revelation as the reason for such caution (*TTE*, 9). Thus, what this means is that, in effect, he is not really Lobsang Rampa *either*.

That is, although it can be understood as deriving a significant amount of its *form* from the dynamics of ornamental culture, it nevertheless still begs the question as to why embarking on such effacement, in the first place, was considered to be increasingly desirable at this point in history. A possible answer to this is that each of these characters provided a liberating example of an individual who had been capable of effacing not so much his origins, understood generally in terms of his background, and more the detailed account of such origins contained in the dossier, the increased appeal of which was proportional to the extension of disciplinary/bio-power through the process of globalization over the previous decade. That is, both the *Bond* phenomenon and the 'Rampa' phenomenon, insofar as they occurred after approximately ten years of endeavor on the part of the North to develop the South,[12] emerged within a world that was growing larger and smaller simultaneously; larger, in the sense that the augmented wealth and mobility of Westerners had put the rest of the world within their reach, and smaller, in the sense that a concomitant increase in communication networks meant that no one could now outrun their past. Under these circumstances, the allure not only of escaping the confines of one's disciplinary identity, but also of being able to redefine oneself entirely, with complete disregard for the process of individualization that had previously taken place through the dossier, is quite understandable. Moreover, that this freedom was only ever temporary, and something that could only ever be experienced vicariously through literature, in no way diminished this allure; on the contrary, it is conceivable that it amplified it, through turning the whole procedure into a kind of literary game, which demanded no more commitment from anyone than the purchase of an increasingly affordable novel.[13]

---

[12] Although, from a cultural perspective, the process of globalization has been concomitant with a process of Westernization (see note 2, Introduction), as Wolfgang Sachs points out in *Planet Dialectics*, in terms of development initiatives, which constitute the primary means by which these two processes have occurred, the directional movement of investment has actually been from North to South. That is, through their direct investment in development initiatives, the cultural influence of 'developed' Western societies in northern countries, such as Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and those of Europe, has been exerted on 'underdeveloped' or 'developing' non-Western societies in southern countries, such as those of South America, Africa and Asia. Sachs, *Planet Dialectics*, 73–74.

[13] While Rampa's creation of a new identity for himself receives significant and progressive endorsement through his remaining works, an interesting variation on the theme of escaping the consequences of the disciplinary dossier emerges in *Doctor from*

Thirdly, in terms of the *Bond* novels, as Denning indicates, such vicarious enjoyment extends into the domain of voyeurism, insofar as Bond's role as spy affords him the regular opportunity to extend his *gaze* over others, while remaining concealed, unnoticed, or in some or other way protected.[14] However, this is by no means something exclusive to *Bond* novels because in Rampa's *The Third Eye* a very similar dynamic occurs, specifically in the part of the narrative that deals with the youthful Rampa's exploration of the Potala palace. That is, after being granted unlimited access to the entire Potala, including the Dalai Lama's quarters high on the roof of the palace, Rampa pauses in (what seems to be) the latter not only to *gaze* generally at Lhasa through transparent windowpanes, but also to *gaze* specifically at aspects of it with the aid of a telescope (*TTE*, 113–115). As such, Rampa not only views Lhasa from a position of relative concealment, in the sense that his activities go unnoticed from the ground below, but he also remains protected as he extends the *gaze*, in virtue of the windowpanes that shield him from the elements. Thus, arguably, the uninterrupted vista spread out before him is analogous to the view from the central tower of the Panopticon. This emerges with increasing clarity further on in the narrative when Rampa, just prior to departing from the Potala, returns to the telescope and uses it *not* to view the surrounding natural environment, but rather to examine the covert laziness and misdemeanors of a young monk far away. Moreover, with regard to this, Rampa not only confesses to experiencing intense shame at the thought that, via the same technology, he himself had previously been observed engaging in comparable illicit activities, but also determines to subsequently operate more strategically to avoid being subjected to the *gaze* (*TTE*, 123–124). Significantly, as he *gazes* at Lhasa, Rampa is clearly a disciplinary Western subject rather than a pre-disciplinary Tibetan figure, because in the narrative it is advanced that next to the telescope was a mirror in which he perceived his aquiline nose and light complexion (*TTE*, 115). Arguably, this is

---

Lhasa, in relation to the promise of postmortem *self*-judgment of personal transgressions, rather than any experience of being subject to authoritarian condemnation and retribution for such transgressions. Rampa, *Doctor from Lhasa*, 102. In turn, while in *The Cave of the Ancients* this theme is elaborated upon further, and while in *Wisdom of the Ancients* it is addressed definitively, in both *The Hermit* and *Tibetan Sage* it is casually integrated into the narrative. Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients*, 36; Rampa, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, 11; Rampa, *The Hermit*, 92; and Rampa, *Tibetan Sage*, 58.

[14] Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," 225–226.

of particular importance, because it provides a solid reason not only for why the invasive vantage and intensification of the *gaze*, afforded by the telescope, is the one thing that Rampa chooses to return to before his departure from the Potala, but also for why his repetition of this activity was experienced as seductive by Western readers.[15] That is, because being Western is indissociable from being objectified and disempowered through the disciplinary technology of the Panopticon, the attractiveness of the opportunity to invert the dynamics of such control, and to exercise the *gaze* over others instead of being subjected to it oneself, could conceivably far outweigh the attractiveness of most other tourist activities in its call for repetition. Moreover, the vicarious enjoyment, on the part of the Western readers of *The Third Eye*, of the exercise of such a *gaze*, stood to be exponentially enhanced by the possibility of identifying closely with the character of Rampa *as* a fellow Westerner.[16]

Fourthly, the discursive influence of bio-power, in the form of the technology of the deployment of sexuality, emerges quite markedly in both the various *Bond* novels and Rampa's *The Third Eye* through reflections of attempts to proclaim a new day of sexual freedom. That is, as Denning recalls in "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," the reification of sex as a key component of the plot first occurred via *Bond* narratives.[17] As such, the notorious sexual connotations of the names of many of the female characters in *Bond* narratives, all of which promise a burgeoning eroticism beneath even

[15] Conceivably, because of the current ubiquity of disciplinary/bio-power as a consequence of globalization, the appeal of the opportunity to invert the dynamics of panoptical surveillance has long since lost its erstwhile cultural specificity.

[16] There exist several different variations on this theme of the inversion of the panoptical *gaze* in Rampa's texts. In *Doctor from Lhasa* it takes the form of Rampa's extrasensory perception, his liberation from panoptical surveillance in the classroom, and, in relation to the reader, the advancement of occult practices as a (potential) means of subjecting unfaithful partners to panoptical surveillance. Rampa, *Doctor from Lhasa*, 61–63, 118, 130. In *The Cave of the Ancients*, in addition to a repetition of the themes of telescopic surveillance and 'auratic' surveillance, the theme of Rampa's capacity to subject others to thought surveillance also emerges. Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients*, 23, 144, 210. Similarly, in *Wisdom of the Ancients*, extrasensory perception is valorized for the panoptical power it bestows on its practitioners. Rampa, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, 27. In turn, while in *The Hermit*, panopticism is augmented exponentially through a reference in the narrative to a type of universal surveillance mechanism, in *Tibetan Sage* the more humble form of telescopic surveillance returns as a theme. Rampa, *The Hermit*, 55; and Rampa, *Tibetan Sage*, 10.

[17] Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," 223.

the most staid and professional demeanor, far from being marginal to the respective plots, are symptomatic of their *generalized* sanctioning of sexuality as a prominent factor in everyday social interaction. In other words, although no *specific* sanctioning takes place within *Bond* narratives in the form of pornographic descriptions of nudity and sex, both are strongly alluded to before being drawn away from at the last possible moment. Admittedly, in terms of scale, there is nothing comparable to this in the narrative of Rampa's *The Third Eye*; however, there is one description, in particular, of certain secret iconographic representations, presumably involving the depiction of *yab-yum*, which employ sexual intercourse as a metaphor. Arguably, this description remains salient because, although Rampa does proceed to explain the metaphoric value of such representations, he does so only *after* thematizing not only the nudity and the sex contained in them, but also the potential for them to be considered highly licentious from a Western perspective (*TTE*, 118). As such, this broaching of a sexually contentious issue before diffusing it and drawing away from it at the last possible moment, which, moreover, resounds through many of Rampa's other works,[18] does seem to be underpinned by the same discursive dynamic that informs the sexual orientation of *Bond* narratives. Admittedly, in this regard, neither *Bond* narratives nor Rampa's narratives involve an inversion of the technology of the deployment of sexuality, but rather operate in terms of the nineteenth century compensatory discursive inversion of the late eighteenth century cautious approach to sex, discussed earlier in Chapter Two, which promises empowerment and freedom while it surreptitiously subordinates.[19]

---

[18] The dynamics of this approach to the naked human body, and in particular the naked female form, are neatly mirrored in *Doctor from Lhasa*, where Rampa recounts, rather repetitively, how he found himself surrounded by naked women in a Japanese prison camp, before sanitizing the experience by qualifying it in terms of his status as a medical practitioner. Rampa, *Doctor from Lhasa*, 188, 192. Similarly, in *The Cave of the Ancients*, while full nudity is advanced as utterly imperative for an accurate reading of a patient's aura, the ostensibly medical nature of such an undertaking implicitly distances it from any sexual connotations. Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients*, 151, 153, 159, 164–165. In turn, aspects of the above are succinctly echoed not only in *Wisdom of the Ancients* and in *The Hermit*, but also in *Tibetan Sage*. Rampa, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, 117, 128; Rampa, *The Hermit*, 31; and Rampa, *Tibetan Sage*, 70, 98–99.

[19] Arguably, this emerges quite clearly in *The Cave of the Ancients*, where Rampa advances an ever more open acceptance of sexuality as a positive development, but couches such acceptance solidly in terms of a dread of the dangers of sexual repression. Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients*, 173, 183.

Fifthly, the inversion of the discursive dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession is palpable in both the various *Bond* novels and Rampa's *The Third Eye*. This occurs through instances in which the residents of various exotic domains are interrogated in the interest of obtaining from them ever more authentic cultural confessions, in a process that is inconceivable in the absence of a belief in a latent cultural meaning beneath the thin veneer of tourist orientated *simulacra*. Indeed, insofar as this interrogation implicitly advances the significance of such revelations to be proportional to the obstacles that must be surmounted before such a denouement can occur, it strongly mimics the dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession. In terms of *Bond* narratives, this occurs whenever, as Denning puts it, Bond is privileged above the ordinary tourist through being granted extraordinary access to intimate cultural domains.[20] Similarly, Rampa appears to be very familiar with such *gradated* tourism insofar as, during his journey toward the Potala, he looks upon those peddling simple souvenirs with relative scorn (*TTE*, 109). Yet, arguably, his derision of these aspects of the tourist trade is not couched in any puritanical attitude that seeks to preserve Vajrayāna Buddhism from commercialization, but is rather underpinned by the fact that he is destined for an extremely rare—and hence far more authentic—tourist experience, namely a trip to the usually inaccessible domain beneath the Potala palace (*TTE*, 110). Moreover, because Rampa only proceeds to this domain later, that is, after his sojourn in (what seems to have been) the Dalai Lama's quarters, it is only achieved by his *descent* through the various levels of the Potala (*TTE*, 118), with the result that the aura of depth surrounding the secret to which he advances is significantly amplified. However, although, like the rest of his tour of the Potala, none of this has any bearing on Rampa's duties as a High Lama, arguably, the point of the narrative is not to detail any such dry and difficult affairs. Rather, in a manner akin to *Bond* narratives, it functions instead to provide the reader with the opportunity to don the mantle of extraordinarily privileged tourist and to vicariously squeeze an authentic cultural confession out of the exotic domain in question. In this case, such a confession was no doubt made all the more enticing because it involved the penetration

[20] Denning, "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption," 222.

of Tibet's habitual cultural silence.[21] In fact, within the compass of the narrative of Rampa's *The Third Eye*, such a privileged form of tourism is valorized to such an extent that it becomes virtually synonymous with Buddhist enlightenment itself. This is evident toward the end of the novel, when Rampa's journey culminates in him entering into a trance and experiencing a vision in which the entire history of the world literally unfurls before him (*TTE*, 250–252). As such, in terms of *The Third Eye*, Buddhist enlightenment is not articulated as the result of lengthy meditative practice, during which the thoughts/mental images that are continuously and spontaneously fabricated by the mind are gradually understood to be *empty*; rather, it is advanced as something akin to an exclusive tourist vision of the world. Yet, as strange as all of this may seem, it is all quite understandable, especially when one remembers the power and value with which images became invested in terms of the new ornamental culture that had come to dominate toward the end of the 1950s, and to which, as discussed, the character of Lobsang Rampa owed so very much.

However, on account of the above, Rampa's *The Third Eye* contains more of a simplistic reflection *of* the disciplinary/bio-power discursive conditions under which it was produced, and less of a tacit reflection *upon* such conditions. This is because, as illustrated, it involves a series of compensatory inversions of the dynamics of the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies, in a manner that affords readers the figurative experience of exercising the power to which they are usually subject. Yet, while the popularity of Rampa's texts bears testimony to the enjoyment derived from the exercise of such compensa-

[21] Arguably, the relationship between, on the one hand, the dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession, and, on the other hand, the individual's compensatory inversion of them through the cultural interrogation of an exotic domain, is drawn into conspicuousness nowhere more saliently than in *Doctor from Lhasa*. Here, Rampa repeatedly escapes the pain of Japanese interrogation by fantasizing about guided tours through secret locations in Tibet. Rampa, *Doctor from Lhasa*, 154–168, 182–186. Similarly, such a compensatory inversion of the dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession constitutes a mainstay of many of Rampa's other narratives. For example, while in *The Cave of the Ancients*, the location to which the title refers is both mentioned at the outset of the narrative and then steadily approached, such that an aura of mystery and the promise of sublime revelation are allowed to surround it, in *Wisdom of the Ancients*, the legitimacy of this discursive dynamic is further embroidered upon in relation to ontological concerns. Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients*, 11, 88; and Rampa, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, 18. In turn, an analogous thematic orientation features prominently in both *The Hermit* and *Tibetan Sage*. Rampa, *The Hermit*, 103–115; and Rampa, *Tibetan Sage*, 23.

tory inversion, arguably, the capacity of his texts to engage critically with the source of the problem to which they blindly respond in this manner, and to which they encourage an equally myopic and repetitive response, remains extremely limited. This is not only because the temporary nature of the respite they offer constitutes more of an opiate that brings momentary relief, and less of an elixir that encourages the pursuit of enduring remedial change. In addition, it is also because, the respite thus provided is only ever partial, on account of the way in which its inversion of the dynamics of the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies leaves the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions thoroughly intact.

That is, firstly, as discussed, Rampa's regimentation of space and time within Tibet on the basis of certain aesthetic criteria, orientated around tourism, which are utterly alien to the modes of interaction that facilitate existence within this domain, provides readers with an opportunity to vicariously do the same; that is, to enjoy organizing and arranging space and time, instead of being organized and arranged around an ever more exhaustively utilitarian appropriation of space and time. However, in doing so, the narrative of Rampa's *The Third Eye* simultaneously allows the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity, which underpins such organization and arrangement, to remain thoroughly intact. This is because it uncritically endorses the validity of regarding space and time as things that can, and should, be manipulated ever more meticulously in the interest of forcing the emergence, at some elusive point in the future, of an ultimate preconceived end, which, moreover, is *not* the organic product of interaction within any given domain.[22] Secondly, as an 'autobiography,' the narrative of Rampa's *The Third Eye* seeks to efface the account in the disciplinary dossier of Cyril Henry Hoskins. However, although it may well serve to encourage similar opposition among readers, it nevertheless only achieves such effacement itself through the creation of an *alternative* account of an enduring historical identity. As such, because it in no way negates the principle of the dossier, it, again, allows evolutive historicity to remain unchallenged, insofar as it was only in terms of this transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption

[22] In the case of Rampa's *The Third Eye*, such a preconceived end would entail the pursuit of the ultimate tourist experience of spatio-temporal privilege, which, by definition, can have no limits.

that the dossier was advanced as an utter necessity, in the interest of controlling and ensuring the progress of the social body toward ever greater efficiency. Thirdly, Rampa, through gaining access to what is tantamount to the central tower of the Panopticon during his trip to the Potala, offers readers the chance to vicariously objectify others through the *gaze*, instead of being objectified by it themselves. However, insofar as this inversion propagates the idea of such overarching surveillance as a normal apparatus that is found within *all* possible domains, the narrative further fails to problematize the legitimacy of the vision of a more efficient future, which derives from evolutive history, and without which such overarching surveillance makes little sense. Fourthly, Rampa's advocacy of a new day of sexual freedom, via his valorization of iconography depicting *yab-yum*, is evidently underpinned by the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of the deployment of sexuality, namely the idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth; as such, albeit inadvertently, Rampa's *The Third Eye* serves to propagate, rather than to dissolve, the perceived validity of such an assumption. Fifthly, Rampa's pursuit of a more authentic cultural confession from Tibet, which concomitantly affords readers the chance to vicariously enjoy a compensatory inversion of the dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession, is clearly underpinned by the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of such confession, namely the idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth to which authority must always be deferred. Thus, again, albeit unwittingly, Rampa's *The Third Eye* serves to augment the general credence with which this assumption has become imbued, instead of presenting it with critical opposition.

Arguably, the most glaring example of such underpinnings emerges in relation to Rampa's stance on reincarnation/rebirth. In short, he coopts this concept and transforms it from an ontological burden into a welcome phenomenon that effectively takes the sting out of death, by ensuring individuals a form of cyclical immortality which, from an enlightened position, can even be consciously manipulated (*TTE*, 245). Admittedly, as Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama, explains in *The Power of Buddhism*, from the perspective of Vajrayāna Buddhism, consciously directed reincarnation, rather than rebirth under the influ-

ence of habitual tendencies, is possible for High Lamas who, in terms of their *bodhisattva* vow, return time and again to assist beings on the path to enlightenment.[23] However, in the narrative of *The Third Eye*, Rampa, although ostensibly a High Lama, is clearly not referring to this. In short, not only does he argue for the existence of an immortal soul, which distances his philosophy from Buddhism. In addition, he also advances transmigration to be a developmental process, insofar as he maintains that on each new occasion one climbs up the ladder of existence, so to speak (*TTE*, 33), the idea of which draws more from the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity than from Buddhist philosophy.[24] Nevertheless, despite such disparity from Buddhist philosophy, these perspectives on transmigration remain very important within the context of Rampa's *The Third Eye*, insofar as, through them, the narrative promises the possibility of both the extension into infinity, and the continual augmentation of, the pleasure provided to the reader by the compensatory discursive mechanisms of inversion that characterize the text.

As such, although the narrative of Rampa's *The Third Eye* exhibits strong opposition against the five main technologies of disciplinary/bio-power, insofar as it inverts the dynamics of all of them, and although it is conceivable that the immense popularity of the text derived significantly from the widespread appeal of such opposition, arguably, no *real* act of discursive transgression takes place through the text. This is because the text not only fails to challenge the divergent transcendent orientations of the implicit founding assumptions that underpin such technologies, but also because, as indicated above, its narrative actually relies heavily on such assumptions for its cogency.

[23] Gyatso and Carrière, *The Power of Buddhism*, 189.

[24] In this regard, it is interesting to note the way in which the theme of *evolution* reoccurs time and again in Rampa's *Doctor from Lhasa*, *The Cave of the Ancients*, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, *The Hermit*, and *Tibetan Sage*, among other texts. Rampa, *Doctor from Lhasa*, 65; Rampa, *The Cave of the Ancients*, 135; Rampa, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, 39; Rampa, *The Hermit*, 10; and Rampa, *Tibetan Sage*, 101.

Table 2 The level of discursive transgression—against the five different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions—that occurs within Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Action in relation to disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Action in relation to transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Level of transgression
Spatio-temporal regimentation	Compensatory inversion. Rampa provides readers with the opportunity to enjoy regimenting space and organizing time within an exotic domain	Evolutive historicity	No problematization	No transgression
The dossier	Compensatory inversion. Rampa provides readers with the opportunity to efface the individualizing process of the dossier	Evolutive historicity	No problematization	No transgression
Panopticism	Compensatory inversion. Rampa provides readers with the chance to gain access to the equivalent of the central tower of a Panopticon situated within an exotic domain	Evolutive historicity	No problematization	No transgression

Table 2 (*cont.*)

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Action in relation to disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Action in relation to transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Level of transgression
The deployment of sexuality	Follows the nineteenth century compensatory inversion of the late eighteenth century cautious approach to sex. Rampa provides readers with the chance to proclaim a new day of sexual freedom	The idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth	No problematization	No transgression
Secularized/ medicalized confession	Compensatory inversion. Rampa provides readers with the occasion to interrogate the residents of an exotic domain in the interest of obtaining from them ever more authentic cultural confessions	The idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately has to defer authority	No problematization	No transgression

CHAPTER SIX

JOHN BLOFELD'S *THE WHEEL OF LIFE: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A WESTERN BUDDHIST*

In contrast to Lobsang Rampa's *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*, John Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist* not only reflects the discursive conditions under which it was produced, but also, more importantly, bears testimony to a growing tacit reflection *upon* such conditions. As will be discussed, this is largely because unlike Rampa, who writes from the perspective of a Tibetan who is already enlightened,[1] Blofeld writes from the more modest perspective of a Westerner simply in search of enlightenment. As such, the value of his text derives not only from the way in which, as a consequence, it was able to resonate deeply with its many Western readers. In addition, it is also valuable because, through tacitly reflecting *upon* the discursive conditions that produced it, it began, at least in part, to unveil the issues to which much of Western Buddhism is a response. This emerges with increasing clarity when one considers not only the reflections of the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier, panopticism, the deployment of sexuality and secularized/medicalized confession, within Blofeld's text, but also the tacit reflection upon some of these technologies and their transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, which occurs simultaneously in the work.

Firstly, Blofeld's accounts of the various exotic domains that he explored during his travels in the Orient, along with his characterization of Tashiding monastery, where his long journey reached its apogee, in many ways *seem* to mirror Rampa's various descriptions of his travels and of Lhasa, discussed in the previous chapter. However, unlike Rampa's descriptions, those proffered by Blofeld never function as a mere compensatory discursive mechanism that simply inverts the dynamics of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation, in the interest of figuratively, temporarily, and partially empowering readers. This is

[1] While the title of Rampa's work indicates the former, in the narrative of the text Rampa unequivocally advances the latter (*TTE*, 117).

because, in Blofeld's text, these descriptions occur alongside a negative thematization of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation that comes very close to a transgressive questioning of the validity of its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity. In short, instead of being represented as unequivocally beneficial, or as the sole means of progress, in Blofeld's work such increasingly intricate divisions of space and time are characterized not only as something from which the author has fled, but also as something that has both scarred his mind and that continues to inhibit his spiritual progress. To begin with, Blofeld, in a manner akin to Rampa, initially appears to view the exotic domains of the Orient from the elevated perspective of a tourist, insofar as he regiments and subdivides the spaces of the latter on the basis of aesthetic criteria that remain foreign to the modes of interaction that facilitate existence within them. With regard to this, certain parallels to Rampa's *The Third Eye* appear to emerge, for example, in Blofeld's account in *The Wheel of Life* of a heavily ornamented religious procession that he was privy to, which he favorably compares to a cinematic *spectacle* unfolding before him, and for the purposes of which he reduces the natural surroundings to a conveniently complementary backdrop.[2] Again, at Tashiding monastery, Blofeld similarly couches sunrise in terms of a theatrical *spectacle* that unfurls before him, and for the purposes of which he reduces the sounds of the monks' morning *sādhana* practice to pleasant accompanying background music. Moreover, like Rampa, Blofeld appears to place significant emphasis on the way in which time is organized within such domains in a manner that is relaxed rather than exhaustively utilitarian in orientation. For example, in his account of certain of his travels in the Orient, Blofeld stresses how they were usually undertaken less in terms of any specific dates on a calendar and more in relation to the broad seasonal changes associated with certain months, and how they were often measured generally in terms of weeks, all of which lent to them a very modest pace. Similarly, he characterizes time at Tashiding as passing with a gentle and natural rhythm, in accordance with the changing position of the sun and in relation to the movements of livestock that simply do not comprehend the concept of hurrying. Indeed, with regard to this, even though his presence there was for the express purpose of

[2] John Blofeld, *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist* (London: Rider & Company, 1978), 141–145.

meeting with the incumbent Tangku Lama, Blofeld remains ignorant of exactly *when* this will take place, such that he is simply obliged to wait patiently until he is eventually sent for (*TWL*, 16–18, 20, 22–23, 30, 114–117).

Yet, arguably, despite appearances, the above do not constitute a mere reflection of disciplinary discourses, in the form of a compensatory discursive mechanism of inversion, which seeks to afford disempowered readers a limited opportunity to wield the spatio-temporal authority habitually denied them within the disciplinary/bio-power domain. Rather, a more circumspect approach reveals these descriptions to be informed by a tacit reflection upon the questionable value of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation. This much emerges quite clearly from the way in which Blofeld contrasts his expansive experiences, as an adult at Tashiding monastery in Sikkim, with his erstwhile onerously regimented experiences, as a child at school in England. That is, his negative recollection of the latter gravitates very much around the way in which this domain constituted the veritable acme of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation, on account of its rigid orientation around what is tantamount to the principle of *enclosure*, the principle of *functional sites*, and the principle of *partitioning*, in terms of which a student's presence in or absence from a particular place at a particular moment in *disciplinary time*, often constituted a punishable offence (*TWL*, 19–20). However, such disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation is not only characterized as something from which the author has, in a sense, fled. In addition, it is also characterized as something from which his flight was not entirely successful, because of the scars that it has left on his mind in the form of certain discursive tendencies, the strength of which he has yet to dissolve.[3] Moreover, although Blofeld felt that at least some advance was made in relation to this problem during his stay at Tashiding, such discursive tendencies nevertheless seem to have continued to inform his subjectivity in a manner that inhibited his spiritual progress—the pressure that he experienced in relation to both his work responsibilities and visa restrictions, which

[3] In his *Bodhisattva of Compassion: The Mystical Tradition of Kuan Yin*, Blofeld bears testimony to this same struggle when he recalls how, in relation to the female Buddhist deity, his mind similarly vacillated between deep veneration for her and a rationalizing tendency that rejected, out of hand, any belief in the preternatural. John Blofeld, *Bodhisattva of Compassion: The Mystical Tradition of Kuan Yin* (Boston: Shambhala, 1988), 26–28.

obliged him to curtail his stay at Tashiding, are arguably indicative of this (*TWL*, 17, 248).[4]

As such, in comparison to the issue of reincarnation/rebirth in Blofeld's work, which, for the most part, on account of the ambivalence that surrounds it, never really develops into anything other than a somewhat cursory intellectual concern (*TWL*, 28–30), disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation, and the manner in which it informs his subjectivity, emerges very strongly as one of the primary issues to which Blofeld's interest in Buddhism constituted a response. That is, although Blofeld maintains that early in his life he accepted transmigration as an article of faith, he nevertheless admits to a continuous inability to believe in it sufficiently to motivate his practice—an inability, which, moreover, persisted even after his stay at Tashiding (*TWL*, 24, 56, 253). Unfortunately, though, he appears to have all too willingly shouldered the blame for this ostensible shortcoming, instead of understanding that he had embraced Buddhism not because he had experienced the prospect of transmigration as unbearable, but because he had experienced the discursive tension that pervades the disciplinary/bio-power domain as too burdensome. Nevertheless, this oversight notwithstanding, his growing tacit reflection *upon* the above mentioned disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation and the negative manner in which it informed his subjectivity, along with his endeavor, however unsuccessful, to free himself of its lingering influence, remain palpable—indeed, palpable enough to come very close to a transgressive questioning of the validity of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity that underpins it.[5]

---

[4] Similarly, during his stay at a remote Zen monastery, Blofeld appears to have been unable to shake off the disciplinary discourses that informed his subjectivity, insofar as he felt impelled to carry out his duties with military precision and alacrity, even in the absence of any supervision. Moreover, afterward, during the war, this same discursive momentum appears to have caused him significant anxiety and guilt, when it prevented him from engaging in certain devotional activities in spite of his earnest wish to do so (*TWL*, 165, 191).

[5] Admittedly, this transgressive questioning becomes somewhat more explicit in his later work *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet: A Practical Guide to the Theory, Purpose, and Techniques of Tantric Meditation*, where Blofeld expresses significant anxiety over the direction that Western society is taking, which, according to him, involves a path toward annihilation rather than progress. John Blofeld, *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet: A Practical Guide to the Theory, Purpose, and Techniques of Tantric Meditation* (New York: Arkana, 1992), 27.

Secondly, although Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life*, as an autobiography, bears a passing resemblance to Rampa's *The Third Eye*, careful scrutiny of the former reveals the extent to which it differs markedly from the latter. This is because, unlike Rampa's text, Blofeld's work does not seek, via any radical redefinition of identity, to efface the account of the author inscribed within the disciplinary dossier, by replacing it with an alternative account that, in effect, remains no less informed by the principle of the dossier. Instead, Blofeld's autobiography involves a tacit reflection upon the limited efficacy of this particular disciplinary technology, and, by implication, therefore also comes very close to a reflection upon the questionable validity of evolutive historicity. In short, this is because, while, on the one hand, such a social trajectory sanctions the technology of the dossier, on the other hand, the viability of such a social trajectory is itself contingent upon the efficacy of technologies such as that of the dossier, which stand as the only guarantors of its success. This occurs most saliently when Blofeld qualifies his autobiography not only by asserting that it was his publisher who suggested the addition of the term to the title of his work, but also by mentioning his reservations about its inclusion, which derived from what he deemed to be its inappropriateness in relation to a book that focuses *only* on the spiritual dimension of his life. Importantly, he then adds that, nevertheless, in keeping with the genre, in what remains of the text he will *sketch out* certain additional related events (*TWL*, 258). Arguably, in doing so, Blofeld, albeit unwittingly, performs a triple action against the dossier. That is, firstly, through presenting an account of the spiritual dimension of his life, he implicitly draws into conspicuousness the way in which all of the highly nuanced dynamics of this aspect of his existence have *escaped* inscription within any part of the disciplinary dossier. Yet, because of the evidently immense impact of these dynamics on his subjectivity, this simultaneously poses serious questions about the efficacy of the dossier to render an adequate account of any individual whenever it fails to take such dynamics into consideration. Secondly, this shortcoming cannot simply be remedied by the subsequent inclusion, within the dossier, of his voluntary account of the spiritual dimension of his life. This is because, while Blofeld's above mentioned qualification of his work occurs toward the end of the text, such that his account at this point still remains incomplete, his subsequent assertion that, from this point onward, he will only *sketch out* certain additional related events, means that his account will also never be thoroughly complete. Thirdly, this also problematizes the

authority of the dossier by thematizing the unavoidable limitations of any autobiography, in terms of scope and thoroughness, despite its voluntary nature and the great effort involved in its compilation. That is, it concurrently raises pertinent questions about the reliability of any biography in the form of a dossier, which is put together under duress, from scraps of information gleaned from anonymous administrative accounts that, for the most part, detail inconsequential incidents, the contexts of which have largely been forgotten by all parties concerned. As such, this implicit three-fold tacit reflection upon the limited efficacy of the dossier, in turn, borders on a transgressive negative appraisal of the validity of evolutive historicity. As discussed, this is because this transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption only makes 'teleological' sense in proportion to the efficacy of technologies such as that of the dossier, which stand as the only guarantors of its success.

Thirdly, in Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life*, unlike in Rampa's *The Third Eye*, the panoptical *gaze* is not characterized as a normal apparatus that is found within *all* possible domains, in a manner that leaves its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity thoroughly intact. Rather, Blofeld's work appears to implicitly parody this technology of surveillance in a way that, again, almost challenges the validity of evolutive historicity. This occurs quite early in the narrative, in relation to a gift of sour tea, which Blofeld maintains he received from an elderly woman who occupied the room adjacent to his at Tashiding monastery. In short, after he had accepted the gift, and after the woman had returned to her room, Blofeld forced himself to drink it just in case she was *gazing* at him through one of the holes in the panel that divided their cells (*TWL*, 27–28). Although this seems to involve the dynamics of the Panopticon, this is not the case for three specific reasons. Firstly, Blofeld characterizes her *gaze* as the product of idle enjoyment, rather than as part of any overarching design to quietly manipulate his behavior and render him docile, in the interest of facilitating the evolution of an ever more efficient social body. Secondly, she is known to him, rather than protected and empowered by anonymity, as would be the case with those in the central tower of the Panopticon. Thirdly, his acquiescence derives from his compassion for her, that is, from his unwillingness to cause her sadness by rejecting her gift, rather than from any fear of potential retribution. As such, and in a manner somewhat akin to his approach to the dossier, discussed above, panoptical surveillance is parodied and problematized in Blofeld's text, both in virtue of the way in which its dynamics are

playfully explored, and on account of the manner in which it is concomitantly characterized as something limited to the West, rather than as something ubiquitous. Moreover, because of the seemingly idyllic life at Tashiding, mentioned earlier, the absence of panopticism from this domain, except in its parodic form, again nearly approximates a transgressive negative evaluation of the validity of evolutive historicity. That is, evolutive historicity implicitly emerges as increasingly suspect for the way in which it not only directs society away from such amiable pre-disciplinary conditions, but also requires oppressive mechanisms like that of panopticism to endlessly pursue its preconceived goal.

Fourthly, there appears to be a resonance between Blofeld's elaboration upon his sexual interests and Rampa's simple advocacy of a new day of sexual freedom, insofar as both are informed by the technology of the deployment of sexuality and, in particular, the nineteenth century compensatory discursive inversion of the late eighteenth century cautious approach to sex. As already discussed, this inversion involved the emergence of a new imperative to proclaim sex unashamedly, in the interest of averting the ostensible dangers posed by eighteenth century sexual 'repression.' This new dynamic is most saliently evinced in the part of the narrative of *The Wheel of Life* where Blofeld thematizes his increasingly habitual visits to houses of prostitution, in a discussion with the Abbot of a Buddhist temple in Peking. However, because the Abbot considered sex to be a relatively arbitrary issue, he not only became increasingly annoyed with Blofeld's endeavor to invest such activities with weighty significance through his act of disclosure, but also, immediately after such disclosure, dismissed the whole affair with some perfunctory advice. That is, he suggested, in a manner that clearly did not open the door to any further disclosure, that Blofeld should patiently await an insight into the *emptiness* of his sexual fantasies (*TWL*, 105–110). Arguably, the importance of this derives not only from the way in which it contrasts with the imperatives of the deployment of sexuality, which demand a constant and limitless preoccupation with speaking of sex. In addition, it is also significant because, at this point, Blofeld very nearly engages in a transgressive negative assessment of the validity of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of the deployment of sexuality, namely the idea that the body is infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth. In effect, such transgression is only narrowly averted by the way in which this assumption is invalidated by someone who is not Western, namely the Abbot—through his intimation concerning the

emptiness of sex—and by the way in which this assumption evidently continues to inform Blofeld's subjectivity long after their exchange (*TWL*, 175, 177).

Fifthly, and in contrast to all of the above, Blofeld's text does not in any way draw close to a transgressive consideration of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of secularized/medicalized confession, namely the idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth to which authority must always be deferred. Rather, both his pursuit of more authentic cultural confessions from the exotic domains in which he traveled, and his much later experimentation with hallucinogens, when, on account of the expansion of disciplinary/bio-power, such domains could no longer be found, were arguably informed by his continued acquiescence to the validity of this assumption. Admittedly, this was perhaps due to the long duration of Blofeld's familiarity with it; that is, he maintains that, during his childhood, he felt *inexplicably* drawn toward the Orient, and even powerfully predisposed to imbue the cultures of this domain with farcically exaggerated degrees of profundity and sagacity (*TWL*, 21–27).[6] Moreover, so intense and enduring was his belief in the existence of some deep, hidden truth within these cultures, that he not only traveled to China immediately after his tertiary education, but also experienced physical discomfort during the journey from the sheer anticipation of the imminent disclosure of such truth. Indeed, in this regard, Blofeld's *various* assertions that, upon his arrival there, he felt as though he had 'returned' after a long period of exile (*TWL*, 30, 32–33), powerfully indicates the extent to which the discursive dynamics at work in his endeavor were thoroughly subjected to transcendence, or, as Foucault suggests in *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, thoroughly mesmerized by the associated possibility of rediscovering some lost or forgotten origin.[7]

---

[6] Admittedly, Blofeld's attraction to the Orient is perhaps less inexplicable than he makes it out to be. That is, his interest in this domain is arguably quite understandable, given the apparent abundance of relatively inexpensive Asian cultural artifacts in Britain at the time, and the concomitant pervasive Oriental aestheticism exhibited by many members of the British middleclass, both of which Blofeld alludes to quite strongly. Similarly, at his school, the influence of Orientalism was palpable in the books available in the library, which Blofeld describes in detail and which, he maintains, he engaged with at length. As such, like so many of his contemporaries, Blofeld's attraction to the Orient was conceivably less a matter of *karma*, and more a matter of collective discursive orientation.

[7] Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 223–224.

In fact, so strong was this subjection to transcendence that, after his arrival, when he began to feel increasingly disillusioned with the country and its culture, on account of its modern and prosaic elements that were incompatible with his earlier imaginings, Blofeld repeated what he had done at school and at university. That is, instead of embracing the reality of historical change and working in terms of it, he promptly rejected the new modernizing China—increasingly informed by disciplinary/bio-power—and instead sought out cultural pockets of traditional China that more or less matched what he had hoped to find, in order to provide the profound truth which they supposedly harbored with an opportunity to shine through momentarily (*TWL*, 33–35, 39–40, 93–94, 145–146). Yet, the arrival of war brought with it the exponential increase in, and expansion of, disciplinary/bio-power that steadily proceeded to infuse, and dramatically alter, all of the cultural spaces that it touched, in a manner that robbed them of their connection with tradition. Although this had a palpably negative effect on Blofeld's spiritual practice (*TWL*, 175), a considerable amount of the torment that he experienced during this period can perhaps be attributed to the peculiar discursive incongruity that informed his position. That is, on the one hand, the discursive dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession had, albeit inadvertently, orientated his subjectivity around a belief in the existence of a transcendent truth hidden within exotic cultural spaces, to which both his childhood preoccupation with the Orient and his later journey to China had all been responses. However, on the other hand, having become ubiquitous in China after the war, disciplinary/bio-power did not provide Blofeld with a subsequent sobering reality. Rather, because the discursive dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession necessarily *accompanied* it, Blofeld, once again, found himself implicitly directed toward the pursuit of the *same* transcendent truth in *other* exotic cultural spaces, even though, ironically, these spaces were becoming increasingly few because of the spread of disciplinary/bio-power. As such, after the war, and surrounded once again by disciplinary/bio-power, Blofeld, somewhat predictably, began to conjure up new myths orientated more around Buddhism than around Chinese culture—presumably because he construed the former as less susceptible to co-option by what is tantamount to disciplinary/bio-power than the latter—all of which ultimately led to his idyllic characterization of Tashiding monastery in the manner described earlier.

Arguably, this began in Hong Kong, where Blofeld, in a manner akin to when he was a child, felt *inexplicably* drawn toward the Himalayas,

and powerfully predisposed to imbue the Buddhist culture of this domain with hyperbolic profundity and sagacity. Understandably, Hong Kong, on account of the modernization that it had undergone, no longer provided a suitable basis for the further development of such myths, and, consequently, Blofeld relocated to Thailand, before traveling through Burma to India, and from India to Nepal, until his pilgrimage finally culminated, as already mentioned, in a visit to Tashiding monastery in Sikkim (*TWL*, 204–207, 215–218, 244). However, although Blofeld's time at Tashiding undoubtedly made a strong impression on him, this impression could never be stronger than the disciplinary/bio-power discourses that underpinned his pilgrimage in the first place, mediated his experience of it, and ultimately constituted the discursive milieu into which he was obliged to plunge, once again, upon his return to Bangkok. As such, it was perhaps almost inevitable that after Tashiding, Blofeld, fully aware of the effort and expense that any pursuit of a transcendent truth in exotic cultural (and religio-philosophic) spaces demanded, and increasingly cognizant of the scarcity of such spaces, finally acquiesced to implicit discursive pressure and began to think of such truth primarily in terms of the legacy of the eighteenth century myths of madness, from which it had originally derived. That is, the disciplinary/bio-power discursive momentum of Bangkok appears to have finally precipitated in Blofeld a conversion 'back' to the more widespread interpretation of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of secularized/medicalized confession, namely the idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of *psychic* truth to which authority must always be deferred. Evidence of this is the way in which, in the face of the limitations mentioned above, Blofeld began to privilege the idea of this primary realm of psychic truth *over* the ostensible 'truth possibilities' afforded by such exotic cultural (and religio-philosophic) spaces, insofar as it was at this point that he began to experiment with hallucinogens (*TWL*, 255).[8]

That the idea of such transcendent truth constituted a weapon for Blofeld in his struggle against what is tantamount to disciplinary/bio-

[8] Blofeld confirms this in *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet*, where he suggests that psychedelic drugs can *occasionally* function to free one from encroaching spiritual doubt. Blofeld, *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet*, 33. As such, his use of hallucinogens in Bangkok comes across quite clearly as a tragically desperate last resort, in the face of what he experienced as the imminent discursive victory of disciplinary/bio-power, to attain an insight into some transcendent truth—the fact that the idea of such truth derived from secularized/medicalized confession in the first place, notwithstanding.

power is perhaps nowhere more clearly evinced than in his valorization of Anagarika Govinda, whom he met on his way to Tashiding, and whom he advanced as his spiritual superior *specifically* on account of the latter's acquaintance with such truth (*TWL*, 237).[9] However, what Blofeld evidently failed to comprehend in this regard is the extent to which he, along with Govinda, whose work will be discussed in the following chapter, both remained equally burdened by the yoke of subjection to transcendence, which subverted the efficacy of their transgression against the discourses of disciplinary/bio-power in an analogous manner.

Table 3 The level of discursive transgression—against the five different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions—that occurs within John Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Action in relation to disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Action in relation to transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Level of transgression
Spatio-temporal regimentation	Partial resistance. This disciplinary technology is something that Blofeld appears to have fled from, and something that he intimates to be potentially damaging to Western subjects	Evolutive historicity	Implicit problematization	Approximates transgression

[9] Arguably, that this remained a concern for Blofeld is evident in his much later work, *Bodhisattva of Compassion*, in which he advances such meditative practice as capable of keeping what are tantamount to disciplinary/bio-power discourses at bay. Blofeld, *Bodhisattva of Compassion*, 117. However, in doing so, what Blofeld does not take into account is the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, which, within any disciplinary/bio-power environment, leads to the constitution of subjectivity as a locus of perpetual conflict, despite the most ardent preoccupation with transcendent mysticism and the most diligent practice of 'quietism.'

Table 3 (*cont.*)

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Action in relation to disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Action in relation to transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Level of transgression
The dossier	Partial resistance. Within the narrative, Blofeld reflects tacitly upon the limited efficacy of this disciplinary technology	Evolutive historicity	Implicit problematization	Approximates transgression
Panopticism	Partial resistance. The dynamics of this disciplinary technology are playfully parodied, and it is characterized as something limited to the West	Evolutive historicity	Implicit problematization	Approximates transgression
The deployment of sexuality	Partial resistance. Via his rearticulation of the words of an Abbot of a Buddhist temple, Blofeld hints at the possibility that sex and sexuality may be 'empty'	The idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth	Implicit problematization	Approximates transgression
Secularized/ medicalized confession	Compensatory inversion. Blofeld acquiesces to this technology, firstly by pursuing more authentic cultural confessions from the exotic domains in which he traveled, and secondly through his later experimentation with hallucinogens	The idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately has to defer authority	No problematization	No transgression

CHAPTER SEVEN

ANAGARIKA GOVINDA'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL *THE WAY OF THE WHITE CLOUDS*

Like John Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*, Anagarika Govinda's autobiographical *The Way of the White Clouds* bears testimony to a growing tacit reflection *upon* the discursive conditions under which it was produced. However, importantly, in contrast to Blofeld's text, Govinda's work also involves discursive attempts to actively transgress the limitations imposed by such conditions. Its progression in this regard can perhaps be attributed, at least in part, to the above mentioned authors' acquaintance with one another's writings. That is, while Blofeld both remarks on Govinda's sagacity, as discussed in the previous chapter, and refers in particular to Govinda's *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (*TWL*, 237, 245), Govinda, in turn, both valorizes Blofeld's authorial capacity,[1] and refers directly to Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life* (*WWC*, 162). Yet, unlike in Blofeld's work, a transgressive, and indeed aggressive, tone is clearly evident from the outset of Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds*, insofar as, in his foreword to the text, Govinda places the work within the context of an intense global conflict between two radically different discursive domains. Moreover, he advances Tibet as the arena in which this struggle is most salient—that is, the struggle between, on the one hand, the modern world of technology, and, on the other hand, the historical world of spirituality (*WWC*, 21). Importantly, although in relation to this struggle, Govinda throws his weight behind the latter rather than the former, unlike Blofeld, he does not simply hope to find and gain access to far-flung, sacrosanct pockets of traditional culture, in the interest of catching momentary glimpses of the transcendent truth that they supposedly harbor. Instead, he indicates that such dwindling domains no longer constitute a source of refuge, that they will never be able to eradicate the consequences of their acquaintance with what amounts to disciplinary/bio-power, and that, as such, what is important is that

[1] Anagarika Govinda, *The Way of the White Clouds* (Woodstock: The Overlook Press, 2005), 139.

their spiritual legacy be saved from extinction (*WWC*, 23). Arguably, all of this is further endorsed in the text through its Prologue in the Red Temple of Tsaparang, in terms of which the five Dhyāni-Buddhas within the ruined temple send out Lama Ngawang Kalzang, later known as Tomo Géshé, as a missionary to save all the peoples of the earth (*WWC*, 32–33, 36). The importance of this, in turn, derives from the fact that Govinda later became a student of the same Tomo Géshé (*WWC*, 72), which, in effect, transforms Govinda's autobiographical account of his time in Tibet into an important component of discursive resistance within the above mentioned conflict. Indeed, from the above, it would seem that this piece of discursive resistance has, by implication, even been ordained by the very Dhyāni-Buddhas themselves.

It is vital to note both this level of messianic fervor in Govinda's work, and the extent to which the narrative of *The Way of the White Clouds* plays out against the backdrop of the above mentioned conflict, because both of these aspects lend an intensity, and indeed a militancy, to the text, in a way that sets it apart from Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life*. However, as will be discussed, despite Govinda's attempts to actively transgress the limitations imposed by the discursive conditions under which his text was produced, arguably, the value of his work derives not so much from its partial success in this regard. Rather, its value derives from the important insights that it inadvertently provides readers into the immense difficulty and subtlety that any such transgression requires in order to be both effective and enduring. This emerges into conspicuousness when one considers the way in which, even though Govinda engages critically with four of the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies, namely spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier, panopticism, and the deployment of sexuality, and even though he commits acts of discursive transgression against their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, in each case, he nevertheless still inadvertently falls prey to such assumptions, insofar as they continue to covertly inform his subjectivity.[2]

Firstly, with regard to the regimentation of space and time, like Blofeld's somewhat lofty accounts of the exotic areas of the Orient in which he traveled at a modest pace, Govinda's descriptions of Tibet

[2] As will be discussed, Govinda, like Blofeld, does not in any way draw close to a transgressive consideration of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of secularized/medicalized confession, namely the idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth to which authority must always be deferred.

also emerge largely from the elevated and leisurely perspective of a tourist. That is, he too both regiments and subdivides its space in terms of aesthetic criteria that are alien to the modes of interaction that facilitate existence within it, and characterizes the passing of time within it as relaxed rather than exhaustively utilitarian in orientation. For example, among other things, in addition to endeavoring to depict, through his artwork, the sublime natural splendor of Tibet, Govinda constantly refers with great enthusiasm to his interest in obtaining good photographs of the religious artifacts that he and his wife, Li Gotami, came across during their travels (*WWC*, 108, 234, 240, 351). However, on account of the above mentioned inflection of the text as a whole, via the foreword and the Prologue in the Red Temple of Tsaparang, unlike Blofeld, Govinda's admittedly unhurried engagement in these various activities appears to have been underpinned less by sentimental dilettantism and more by strategic design, namely the endeavor to preserve the spiritual legacy of Tibet from extinction. Moreover, in contrast to Blofeld's accounts, Govinda's descriptions of Tibet and Vajrayāna Buddhism do not simply occur alongside an oblique thematization of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation as something negative; on the contrary, they emerge in conjunction with an overtly aggressive criticism of this technology, and a negation of its validity.

With regard to what is tantamount to the disciplinary regimentation of space, Govinda not only explicitly decries the modern obsession with systematically arranging space, in the interest of orchestrating and channeling existence, but also, more importantly, qualifies his criticism by arguing that such regulatory endeavors do not engender the development of an increasingly capable and adaptable society. That is, he advances that such intensifying forms of spatial regimentation result in the widespread diminishment of dynamism and innovation, insofar as they rob subjects of both the opportunity to be challenged by the unanticipated and, consequently, the obligation to deal with such problems in individualistic and creative ways. In addition, in an attempt to augment the cogency of his argument, Govinda also contrasts his experience of the suffocating confines of the modern city, with his experience of spaciousness and freedom during his travels in the area that connects Ladakh with Tibet, which, because of its remoteness at the time, remained largely unencumbered by any arbitrary 'official' appropriation and division of space (*WWC*, 100–101). In relation to this, he indicates quite clearly that such experiences were not merely an idiosyncrasy on his part, but rather characteristic of experience within

the domain in general, when he asserts that the border between the two countries was largely ignored by the inhabitants of the immediate area, insofar as they traveled across it in accordance with either necessity or casual inclination (*WWC*, 358).

Similarly, with regard to what is tantamount to the disciplinary regimentation of time, Govinda asserts, quite unequivocally, that it has not only subordinated Western subjects, but has also, ironically, robbed them of time by coercing them into ever more frenetic activity. Following on from this, he again contrasts such a modern perspective of time with the perspective of time prevalent in the area that connects Ladakh with Tibet. There, the people, instead of dividing up and prearranging time in such a manner, not only approached it holistically, but also regarded it as something sacrosanct that was indivisible in terms of any arbitrary 'economic' schemas, all of which, in short, allowed them to flow with time rather than work against the clock (*WWC*, 100–101). Indeed, because of this, he characterizes them as operating in relation to their history as a whole, because of the way in which even the most ancient of events and figures remain in view in terms of such a perspective of time (*WWC*, 360). Arguably, Govinda thereby implicitly contrasts them with Western subjects, who distance themselves increasingly from and rapidly lose sight of their past, through their ever more exhaustively utilitarian division of the present.[3]

As such, Govinda makes it blatantly clear not only that his experiences within this exotic domain were good, but also that they were better than any of his previous experiences within what is tantamount to disciplinary society, while simultaneously qualifying the positive nature of such experiences in terms of their capacity to produce an increasingly capable and adaptable society of dynamic, creative, intuitive and historically grounded individuals. Thus, unlike Blofeld, Govinda not only criticizes disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation in a manner that is forceful and unequivocal. In addition, and more importantly, he also commits an act of transgression against the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity that underpins such regimentation, insofar as he explicitly negates the idea

[3] These themes are expanded upon in Govinda's *Psycho-Cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stupa*, where he, in a sense, continues with the endeavor to assist contemporary Western subjects to resituate themselves within a cosmic space and time, rather than within what amounts to disciplinary space and time. Anagarika Govinda, *Psycho-Cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stupa* (Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1976), xiii–xvi.

that evolutive historicity constitutes a valid and reasonable path to pursue into the future.[4]

Yet, at the same time, Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds*, albeit inadvertently, provides readers with important insights into the immense difficulty and subtlety that any such transgression requires in order to be both effective and enduring. This is because, toward the end of the narrative, it becomes increasingly evident that both disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation and its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity continue to inform Govinda's subjectivity, notwithstanding his above mentioned act of transgression. In short, after their eventual arrival at the derelict erstwhile capital of Western Tibet, namely Tsaparang, Govinda and his wife, in proportion to their diminishing permission to remain in this particular *space*, found themselves voluntarily hastening exhaustively against *time*, as they sought to record the religious artwork within an abandoned temple, as part of a general endeavor to preserve the spiritual legacy of Tibet, in the interest of facilitating the world's *future salvation* (*WWC*, 306, 339–342). Needless to say, the discursive parallels between this and the *telos* of evolutive historicity, which underpins disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation, are unmistakable. Indeed, the very possibility of Govinda articulating his undertaking in such terms, or even conceiving of such a task in the first place, remains utterly predicated on both the technology of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation and its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity. Thus, Govinda's text provides readers with a particularly

[4] This is also palpable in Govinda's *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, which, arguably, constitutes a supplement of sorts to *The Way of the White Clouds*, insofar as, throughout the latter work, Govinda refers to this earlier work as a supporting text (*WWC*, 73, 240, 366). In this earlier work, as already mentioned, Govinda speaks of the immense capacity of Buddhist meditation to facilitate the restoration of humankind. However, because it is inconceivable that the Buddha would ever have used the term *man* in the sense in which Govinda, writing from a twentieth century perspective, goes on to use it, when Govinda refers to the capacity of meditation to dissolve the conflicts and limitations that plague *us*, it seems entirely possible that he is pointing intuitively toward the discursive tensions of the disciplinary/bio-power terrain, and the way in which these tensions have constituted contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict. Moreover, further evidence that Govinda is indeed reacting to the advent of disciplinary/bio-power and its effects on subjectivity, by suggesting Vajrayāna Buddhism as a remedial measure, emerges when he goes so far as to juxtapose the discursive weapons of the Enlightenment, namely scientific formulas, with those of Vajrayāna Buddhism, namely mantras. Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, 27, 166, 170.

poignant example of how disciplinary discourses, which have habitually *spoken* the contemporary subject into existence throughout his/her entire life, via an enduring process of pervasive imperatives and invasive whispers, cannot simply be relinquished by any single transgressive statement, no matter how explicit, vociferous, and indeed logical, such a statement may be.

Secondly, in *The Way of the White Clouds*, Govinda does not simply problematize the dossier implicitly, in a manner akin to Blofeld in *The Wheel of Life*, but rather does so explicitly through ritualistically abandoning his disciplinary identity, as Ernst Lothar Hoffman, in favor of embracing a new identity, as Anagarika Govinda. Yet, unlike Rampa, who only achieved the effacement of his former disciplinary identity, as Cyril Henry Hoskins, through the creation of an alternative account of his enduring historical identity *as* Lobsang Rampa, in a manner that remained thoroughly informed by the principle of the dossier, Govinda provides no such substitute record. That is, although Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds* is autobiographical in the sense that it describes his travels in Tibet after his departure from Ceylon, he does not elaborate significantly upon his life *in* Ceylon, where his change of identity occurred. Similarly, his reasons for rejecting the latter domain are only either accounted for in vague terms as a response to a pressing intuition, or attributed somewhat obliquely to a growing dissatisfaction with the form of Buddhism practiced there (*WWC*, 42, 65, 117, 216). As such, Govinda's adoption of a new name in Ceylon is also concomitant with a significant gap in his personal narrative that, by remaining unfilled, constitutes a direct challenge to the dossier. This is further augmented by the fact that the new name which he adopts partly suggests one who has relinquished attachment to any permanent place of residence (*WWC*, 214). That is, in addition to its obvious ascetic connotations, the adoption of such a name simultaneously communicates a successful escape from the duties that tend to accompany the stability of such permanent residence, in a manner that in no way rules out the possibility of such residence being construed in a broad sense as disciplinary/bio-power society. As such, Govinda's adoption of *such* an identity in *such* a way, because it challenges the dossier by problematizing its efficacy, also, arguably, constitutes an act of transgression against the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity, which both sanctions the dossier and relies upon the efficacy of this disciplinary technology for its own cogency.

However, again, the transgressive nature of this act notwithstanding, already in the first half of the narrative of *The Way of the White Clouds*, its limitations emerge very strongly, insofar as the discursive momentum of the disciplinary dossier evidently continues to inform Govinda's subjectivity in a very powerful manner—in fact, so much so that it obliges him to turn away, at a crucial moment, from penetrating insight into the emptiness of his discursively constituted identity. That is, according to the narrative, Govinda, via a long, dangerous and difficult journey, paid a visit to a well-known hermit in Thangu. After arriving there, and before meeting with him, Govinda endured a very memorable but nevertheless very disturbing mystical experience, in which he felt acutely threatened by an imminent preternatural dissipation of his identity (*WWC*, 153–154). It is, however, arguably unnecessary to delve into the realm of the supernatural to understand how any contemporary subject, who is acquainted with meditative introspection, could, after a long, arduous journey, find him/herself in a similar situation; that is, fatigued into a state of such deep quietude and resignation that they momentarily cease to identify with, and instead catch a detached glimpse of, the habitual motions of certain of the discourses that otherwise inform their subjectivity. In fact, with regard to this, it should be remembered that, as advanced in the *Satipatthāna Sutta*—which Govinda maintains he was familiar with (*WWC*, 72)—meditation begins with a focus on breath that allows for the relaxed arising and passing of thoughts, such that, by definition, they are seen to emerge and dissolve spontaneously in accordance with the authority of habit, rather than as a consequence of one's exercise of autonomy.[5] Accordingly, if any contemporary subject were, via such meditative introspection, able to desist even momentarily from identifying with, for example, the imperatives of disciplinary spatio-temporal regimentation or the identity discursively constituted through the dossier, and to watch such imperatives and such a notion arise and pass instead, they would conceivably experience a sense of spaciousness and relaxation. Indeed, in relation to this, Govinda attests to brief enjoyment of something akin to this on the night in question (*WWC*, 154). Conversely, though, because of the strong discursive momentum behind both disciplinary

[5] "Satipatthāna Sutta," in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*, trans. Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2005), 145–155.

spatio-temporal imperatives and the fabrication of the identity of the contemporary subject through the disciplinary technology of the dossier, the pleasant porosity of the above mentioned experience can, all too swiftly, be followed by a knee-jerk habitual urgency to lend integrity to one's identity once again. In this regard, it is arguably quite telling that Govinda not only panicked specifically at the prospect of dissolving into *namelessness*, but also that he reacted to the ordeal by hastily sketching an image of his own *face*, the practice of which appears to have restored him to a state of calm (*WWC*, 154). Moreover, such concern over the ostensible irreducibility of individuality is not limited to *The Way of the White Clouds*, but rather constitutes a significantly consistent theme in Govinda's other works.[6]

Thirdly, Govinda far exceeds Blofeld's simple and tentative parodying of the disciplinary technology of panopticism, in virtue of the manner in which he not only comments explicitly on the harmful effects on subjectivity of panopticism, but also goes so far as to invoke the *bodhisattva* Avalokiteśvara, in the iconographic form of Chenrezi, to heal the wounds that this technology has inflicted and, presumably, to protect the faithful against such injury in the future. That is, during an overnight stay at a remote monastery, and after experiencing a sublime mystical vision, Govinda invoked Chenrezi in a series of poetic stanzas, one of which, in particular, is markedly different not only from the rest, but also from Buddhist devotional literature in general (*WWC*, 86–92). The stanza in question derives its poignancy from the way in which, while

[6] While Govinda goes on to defend this stance vehemently in *The Way of the White Clouds* (*WWC*, 169, 182), in *Insights of a Himalayan Pilgrim*, he again argues for the validity of his position as the middle ground between exaggerated Western individualism and the equally hyperbolic tendency in the East to negate individuality. Anagarika Govinda, *Insights of a Himalayan Pilgrim* (Oakland: Dharma Publishing, 1991), 151. Similarly, while in *Psycho-Cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stupa*, Govinda advances individuality as something upon which enlightenment can, in a sense, be built and expanded, in *Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness*, he even goes so far as to intimate that the Buddha was an existentialist of sorts. Govinda, *Psycho-Cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stupa*, 5; and Anagarika Govinda, *Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness* (Wheaton: Quest Books, 1978), 22. Arguably, with regard to the latter, attributing to the Buddha an existentialist orientation is particularly telling, not only because existentialism is an entirely *modern* philosophical stance produced, for the most part, by disciplinary/bio-power. In addition, it is also telling because, just as existentialism was, broadly speaking, orientated around subjection to transcendence, in the form of the ostensible irreducibility of *Being*, so too, Govinda's stance toward individuality is orientated around the ostensible irreducibility of highly individualized types of consciousness.

it imbues Chenrezi with a universal *gaze*, it carefully distinguishes this *gaze* from the panoptical *gaze*, insofar as it defines the former against the latter, as a *gaze* that does not cause anyone any harm, or lead to the censure of anyone for anything that they may be observed doing, but rather nurtures all that it falls upon (*WWC*, 91). As such, while, for the most part, the remainder of the stanzas resonates more or less with traditional Buddhist doctrine and iconography, the above mentioned stanza is conspicuously orientated around something new, namely an overt abhorrence of the manipulative authority wielded through the panoptical *gaze*, and a plea to Chenrezi for assistance in overcoming the suffering caused by this disciplinary technology. Arguably, this is indissociable from an act of transgression against the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity, which sanctions panopticism no less than the dossier, and which similarly relies, in turn, on the efficacy of such overarching surveillance for its own cogency.

However, yet again, despite the transgressive nature of the above stanza, the immense momentum of disciplinary discourses is once more revealed toward the end of the narrative of *The Way of the White Clouds*, through the manner in which Govinda's subjectivity emerges as still strongly informed by panopticism, despite his evident spiritual devotion and lengthy stay within Tibet. That is, the degree to which Govinda, even in the heart of Tibet, still feels the habitual weight of the panoptical *gaze*, is neatly illustrated in his exchange with Li Gotami over access to a locked temple on a deserted hill. In short, on the one hand, Li felt that she would be able to gain access to it, and could think of no good reason why she should not try to do so, on account of the complete absence of anyone else in the immediate vicinity. On the other hand, Govinda exhibited immense concern over the possibility that someone, hiding somewhere, might secretly be subjecting them to the *gaze*, and recording all that they were observed doing, with a view to visiting upon them some or other form of retribution in the near future. Admittedly, on their way back from the temple, Govinda maintains that they did unexpectedly encounter some people along the road (*WWC*, 330–333). However, if one resists the temptation to attribute Govinda's paranoia to any clairvoyance on his part, and remembers that this meeting was indeed *unexpected*, what one can glean from this episode is a somewhat more realistic, and hence far more valuable, insight into the powerful way in which the discursive legacy of panopticism informs subjectivity. After all, the above was not

the only instance in which Govinda exhibited paranoia in relation to the prospect of being subjected to the panoptical *gaze*. In addition, he exhibited similar paranoia after gaining access to the peak of Tsaparang, which, for some or other reason, he felt the local authorities wanted to prevent him from reaching. That is, after he finished exploring the temple that he found on the summit, and while he was *gazing* down momentarily at his wife far below, Govinda seems to have instantly and irresistibly recollected the dynamics of panopticism—perhaps triggered by his act of surveying her while she remained oblivious to his *gaze*. In short, he not only developed a sudden overwhelming fear that someone, hiding somewhere, was secretly subjecting him to the *gaze*,[7] but also responded by descending immediately in compliance with what he believed was expected of him (*WWC*, 343–350). In this regard, it is arguably quite telling that, even though their work at Tsaparang was finished, such that their banishment from the domain could have made little difference at this stage, Govinda, nevertheless, under the weight of the discursive legacy of panopticism, was evidently unable to desist from acquiescing to long-standing habit.

Fourthly, Govinda, unlike Rampa and Blofeld, challenges the technology of the deployment of sexuality and transgresses against its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth. That is, in contrast to both Rampa's tentative approach to nudity behind the protective shield of medical authority,[8] and Blofeld's attempt to imbue his sexual activity with weighty significance through the act of disclosure, Govinda's sentiments appear to resonate more readily with the perspectives of the Abbot to whom Blofeld confessed his sexual concerns, and for whom sex was a relatively arbitrary issue. This is particularly salient in the narrative of *The Way of the White Clouds* when Govinda expresses appreciation for the manner in which, in Tibet, the naked body has been spared of the weighty investment of meaning it has received in the West. Indeed, Govinda goes to some trouble to thematize how such a relaxed and

[7] Admittedly, Govinda states that his wife silently communicated as much to him; however, considering the great distance that separated them, along with her earlier exhibition of flagrant disregard for the notion of the panoptical *gaze*, it is perhaps more conceivable that, in this instance, Govinda, at least to some extent, interpreted her actions in the light of his own habitual concerns.

[8] See note 18, Chapter Five.

accepting attitude toward the naked body is, at least to a certain extent, shared by the ecclesiastical classes and the peasant classes alike (*WWC*, 226–227, 233). As such, because Govinda's statements advocate the *unconditional* acceptance of the naked body as something simple and superficial—that is, as something devoid of any complex and profound sexual secret—they not only explicitly challenge the technology of the deployment of sexuality, in terms of which the body emerged as increasingly problematic during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition, they also transgress against the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of this technology.

However, once more, notwithstanding the transgressive nature of Govinda's statements in this regard, the commanding momentum of bio-power, in the form of the technology of the deployment of sexuality, arguably continued to inform his subjectivity to a great extent. This is clearly evinced, for example, during his trek toward Himachal Pradesh, when Govinda seems to have been incapable of extending such relaxed acceptance toward his own naked body, insofar as he remained utterly powerless to shed his clothing at night for the purposes of sleeping, in sharp contradistinction to all of the Tibetan men and women who accompanied him (*WWC*, 352, 357).

Yet, this ambivalence notwithstanding, even a cursory overview of the four preceding ways in which Govinda, through his writing, engaged critically with aspects of disciplinary/bio-power, begs the question of the appropriateness of describing *The Way of the White Clouds* as an account of a (Buddhist) *spiritual* journey. This is because, the spaciousness and freedom that Govinda experienced in Tibet appears to have had, respectively, less to do with spirituality, and more to do with the absence of disciplinary spatio-temporality; less to do with the dissolution of *dukkha*, and more to do with the dismantling of the dossier; less to do with the augmentation of moral purity, and more to do with the mitigation of panopticism; and less to do with the performance of *sādhanas*, and more to do with the de-valuation of sexuality. Indeed, it is perhaps for this reason that Govinda's perspective on transmigration became inflected away from the idea of it as something 'unbearable,' toward an embrace of it as a means of lending more dynamism to the experience of life (*WWC*, 202, 205–206, 209). That is, Govinda's valorization of such dynamism seems to have followed closely in the wake of his abhorrence of the limitations and stasis imposed on life by what is tantamount to disciplinary/bio-power, such that it functioned as a means of discursive opposition to such constraints.

However, fifthly, and in contrast to all of the above, Govinda, like Blofeld, never draws close either to challenging the technology of secularized/medicalized confession, or to a transgressive consideration of its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth to which authority must always be deferred. That is, he not only directly posits the existence of, and defers authority to, such a realm when he advances, among other things, the hermeneutic power and significance of dreams as subtle indicators of the elusive promptings of the mind (*WWC*, 117). In addition, at a more figurative level, he also pursues more authentic cultural confessions from the exotic domain of Tibet. Although qualified in terms of a strategic endeavor to preserve the spiritual heritage of that country for future generations, these pursuits nevertheless remain thoroughly subjected to the idea of a transcendent truth; namely, one that must be hunted down, but which can only ever be approximated and momentarily glimpsed. For example, Govinda not only seems to suggest that through engaging in silence during his time in Tibet, he gradually became acquainted with such transcendent truth. In addition, he appears to advance that through increasing familiarity with such transcendent truth, it became possible for him to be surreptitiously taught by it through mystical visions, guided by it to mystical places, and invested by it at crucial moments with saving mystical power (*WWC*, 42, 87–89, 96, 124). Arguably, in many ways, Govinda's subjection to transcendence in this sense can be understood as something that mediated all of his endeavors throughout his whole life, from his avowed childhood fascination with mining, to his avowed adult fascination with psycho-spirituality (*WWC*, 115–116). As such, it is perhaps no surprise that even on the peak of Tsaparang, which constituted the veritable apogee of his long and arduous pilgrimage, Govinda's experiences continued to be mediated by a belief in the legitimacy of pursuing a deep, transcendent truth. In this regard, because, as already discussed, the dynamics of secularized/medicalized confession dictate that the significance of any revelation is proportional to the obstacles that must be surmounted before such a denouement can occur, the alleged endeavor on the part of the local authorities to restrict Govinda to the base of Tsaparang, mentioned earlier, was no doubt quite convenient. That is, it allowed Govinda the opportunity to partake in a 'game of truth,' in terms of which he could play the role of the protagonist, who steals silently across a forbidden threshold into a dusky sacrosanct domain, to discover, with the turn of an ancient doorknob and the creaking of a great iron-studded door, a long-forgot-

ten and utterly sublime secret. The irony of the extent to which such ostensible transgression conforms entirely to the 'rules' of subjection to transcendence, within the ambit of secularized/medicalized confession, can scarcely be missed.

Table 4 The level of discursive transgression—against the five different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions—that occurs within Anagarika Govinda's autobiographical *The Way of the White Clouds*

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Action in relation to disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Action in relation to transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Level of transgression
Spatio-temporal regimentation	Strong resistance. Govinda argues that this technology does not engender the development of an increasingly capable and adaptable society	Evolutive historicity	Explicit problematization	Successful transgression but not enduring, because this aspect of disciplinary/ bio-power evidently continues to inform his subjectivity
The dossier	Strong resistance. Through ritualistically abandoning his disciplinary identity, and through failing to provide an alternative account of his new identity, Govinda explicitly opposes this disciplinary technology	Evolutive historicity	Explicit problematization	Successful transgression but not enduring, because this aspect of disciplinary/bio-power evidently continues to inform his subjectivity

Table 4 (*cont.*)

Disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Action in relation to disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Action in relation to transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Level of transgression
Panopticism	Strong resistance. Govinda explicitly advances the harmful effects on subjectivity of this disciplinary technology	Evolutive historicity	Explicit problematization	Successful transgression but not enduring, because this aspect of disciplinary/bio-power evidently continues to inform his subjectivity
The deployment of sexuality	Strong resistance. Govinda expresses appreciation for the manner in which, in Tibet, the naked body has been spared of the weighty investment of meaning it has received in the West	The idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth	Explicit problematization	Successful transgression but not enduring, because this aspect of disciplinary/bio-power evidently continues to inform his subjectivity
Secularized/ medicalized confession	Compensatory inversion. Govinda acquiesces to this technology, firstly by pursuing more authentic cultural confessions from the exotic domain of Tibet, and secondly through advancing his growing acquaintance with transcendent truth	The idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately has to defer authority	No problematization	No transgression

PART III

ENGAGING WITH THE DISCURSIVE LIMITS OF TRANSGRESSION

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE 'TECHNOLOGICAL MIND,' DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, AND THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW TYPE OF SOCIALLY ENGAGED CONTEMPORARY WESTERN BUDDHISM

The works of Lobsang Rampa, John Blofeld and Anagarika Govinda, discussed in the previous section, bear testimony to both the role of disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the constitution of subjectivity as a locus of perpetual conflict, and the immense difficulty that any attempt to reposition one's subjectivity in relation to such discourses entails. Yet, on the one hand, instead of heeding their failure in this regard, a great deal of contemporary Western Buddhism in general, and contemporary Western Vajrayāna Buddhism in particular, has simply blundered forward blindly in their wake, by elaborating ever more enthusiastically upon the capacity of 'traditional' Buddhism to function as a panacea for all the social ills of the West. Arguably, this much is neatly evinced in the work of Robert Thurman, among others, and this chapter will commence with a brief consideration of some of his texts. However, on the other hand, because the respective works of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda emerged at the beginning of, and as part of, the fourth phase of the discursive apparatus that mediated Western involvement with Tibet, the subsequent shift in focus associated with the later fifth phase of this discursive apparatus (of which the current work is part), has involved an increasingly critical approach to their texts. Aside from the well-known manifestation of such a critical approach in Donald Lopez's *Prisoners of Shangri-La*,[1] Rob Nairn's perspective on their works, which has developed against the backdrop of his focus on the practicalities of meditation, is a case in point. As such, this chapter will continue with a brief overview of his more pragmatic stance on Buddhist meditative practice. However, although Nairn's meditative practices, insofar as they render Buddhist meditation increasingly accessible to contemporary Westerners, constitute a significant advance on the works of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda, arguably, his failure

[1] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 59–63, 86–113, 125–127, 145–146, 202.

to acknowledge the role of disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the formation of subjectivity concomitantly undermines the efficacy of such practices. Admittedly, to some extent, socially engaged Buddhism does approximate a possible way in which to overcome such limitations; yet, in many respects, it is similarly hampered in this regard in virtue of its tendency to focus primarily on broad politico-economic dynamics, rather than on the disciplinary/bio-power discourses which covertly underpin such dynamics. As such, after an exploration of the strategy, nuances and general focus of socially engaged Buddhism, and after an examination of the way in which these three aspects of it leave disciplinary/bio-power discourses free to inform subjectivity around tendencies that are completely inimical to meditation, a four-fold strategy for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, capable of overcoming such limitations, will be proposed. In short, this strategy comprises of an acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, the adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice, the use of meditation as a means of approximating 'immanent reflexivity' in association with such discourse analysis, and a commitment to problematize the production of 'truth' through disciplinary/bio-power. On the one hand, despite the Foucaultian orientation of this four-fold strategy, it nevertheless stands to resonate with certain aspects of the agendas of some socialist organizations, most notably, aspects of the environmentalist agenda of the social greens,[2] as advocated by figures such as Wolfgang Sachs, whose *Planet Dialectics* was referred to in the introduction

[2] Jennifer Clapp and Peter Dauvergne, in their *Paths to a Green World*, divide the spectrum of opposing voices on the environmental crisis into four categories, namely the positions of the 'market liberals,' 'institutionalists,' 'bioenvironmentalists,' and 'social greens.' In short, while the 'market liberals' maintain that economic growth constitutes the panacea for all potential environmental ills, the 'institutionalists' maintain that comparable environmental stability can be achieved through the entrenchment and development of global institutions that can guide the expansion of the global economy. In contrast, while 'bioenvironmentalists' maintain that further economic growth and development stand to exceed the earth's capacity to sustain life, 'social greens' maintain, similarly, that such growth and development need to be severely curtailed; however, they argue for this not only because of the direct link between, on the one hand, such economic growth and development, and, on the other hand, environmental degradation. In addition, they also advance that the proliferation of the former is indissociable from the perpetration of deep social injustice at a global level, which indirectly fuels the fires of the environmental crisis even further. Clapp and Dauvergne, *Paths to a Green World*, 14–15.

of the current work. In the interest of facilitating an articulation of these different struggles, such resonance will be explored at this point. However, on the other hand, because the proposed four-fold strategy neither advances that any one despotic force illegitimately controls any given population through manipulative institutions, nor asserts that the consequent solution rests with mass movements, the reformation of such institutions, and/or the formation of new legitimate institutions, a partial dissonance exists between it and certain aspects of *other* social strategies, such as those that derive from the anarcho-syndicalist tradition. In this regard, the work of David Loy serves as a good example, both because it is, arguably, largely anarcho-syndicalist in orientation, and because it involves a blending of such an orientation with Buddhist theory and perspectives, in the interest of engendering 'revolution.' As such, and because any articulation of struggles must necessarily avoid an unwitting reduction of one to the other, with reference to the work of David Loy, this chapter will conclude with a few remarks upon the relevant differences between his strategy and the strategy proposed in the current work.

To begin with, on the one hand, the discursive trend established and developed by Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda, which involves the heralding of 'traditional' Buddhism as a panacea for all the social ills of the West, has found keen support among many adherents of contemporary Western Buddhism in general, and contemporary Western Vajrayāna Buddhism in particular. In this regard, the work of Robert Thurman, among others, is a case in point, insofar as it not only echoes the work of Govinda in its polemical tone, but also, in many ways, exceeds the latter in terms of its messianic fervor. To be sure, Thurman's work, on account of the immense research upon which it is based, has significantly broadened and deepened Western understanding of Vajrayāna Buddhism, while his formidable capacity as a teacher has played a key role in dissolving earlier Western fabrications on the topic. However, while such augmented insights on Thurman's part have been afforded through his intensive and prolonged immersion within Vajrayāna Buddhist philosophy and meditation, and, for that matter, within Tibetan culture, such immersion appears to have been concomitant with a growing fundamentalism of sorts. In short, as Donald Lopez maintains in *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, not only is Thurman conspicuous for the way in which he wholeheartedly subscribes to traditional Tibetan beliefs, but he is also known for advancing that it is in the world's best

interest for it to adopt certain aspects of Vajrayāna Buddhism.[3] In fact, in *Inner Revolution: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Real Happiness*, Thurman even goes so far as to assert that Tibetan spirituality constitutes both the primary source of *world* enlightenment and the means to such enlightenment.[4] This is, of course, not to suggest that Thurman's fundamentalism is exclusive of Western spirituality; on the contrary, in *The Jewel Tree of Tibet: The Enlightenment Engine of Tibetan Buddhism*, for example, he remains entirely open to the idiosyncratic inclusion, upon the visualized 'Refuge Tree,' of whatever Western spiritual or philosophical figures appeal to the practitioner in question.[5] However, as is evident from the rest of his text, their inclusion within such 'traditional' Vajrayāna Buddhist iconography also involves the subjection of their respective philosophies to Vajrayāna Buddhist doctrine, rather than the establishment of any dialogical relationship between the former and the latter. That this is not construed as an act of discursive violence is, perhaps, due to the sublime apocalyptic backdrop against which it occurs, namely the Tibetan prophecy of Shambhala, which Thurman elaborates upon in *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*,[6] and which easily transforms such negative discursive 'co-option' into positive discursive 'distillation,' on the way to this redemptive event. Indeed, against this backdrop, Thurman, far more explicitly than Govinda,[7] endeavors to co-opt the mantle of Western science to augment the contemporary popular embrace of Vajrayāna Buddhist practices. That is, as Lopez argues in *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, Thurman does not make any distinction between Buddhism and science, but rather goes to a great deal of trouble in his various texts to articulate Buddhism *as* scientific,[8] all of which is clearly illustrated in his regular characterization of advanced Buddhist practitioners as 'scientists,' and, similarly, in his portrayal of enlightenment as a matter of 'evolution,' as he engages in polemical combat with the excesses of Western modernity. Yet, as discussed in the previous three chapters of the current work, such a polemical approach,

[3] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 83, 147.

[4] Robert A. F. Thurman, *Inner Revolution: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Real Happiness* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), 225–239.

[5] Robert A. F. Thurman, *The Jewel Tree of Tibet: The Enlightenment Engine of Tibetan Buddhism* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 101, 135.

[6] Robert A. F. Thurman, *Essential Tibetan Buddhism* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 8–9.

[7] See note 4, Chapter Seven.

[8] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 84.

regardless of the degree of its vehemence or the extent of the scholarship that supports it, remains largely useless against the invasive and enduring influence of disciplinary/bio-power discourses, which simply continue, with relative impunity, to constitute subjectivity as a locus of perpetual conflict.[9]

However, on the other hand, although the respective works of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda played a key role in the canalization of Western involvement with 'traditional' Buddhism, because of the incongruities between the rather lofty literary nature of such channeling and the often mundane and difficult practicalities of meditation, it is not uncommon for Westerners' deepening involvement with Buddhism to be concomitant with a growing critical stance toward the works of these authors. In this regard, the work of Rob Nairn is a case in point. Born almost four decades after Govinda, and a generation after Blofeld, Nairn's path was nevertheless similar to theirs insofar as, as Erika Van Greunen explains, he too traveled to India in the early 1960s for the purpose of studying meditation. Moreover, after continual involvement with meditation for more than twenty years, under the guidance of world-renowned teachers, Nairn completed a four-year meditation retreat at the Kagyü Buddhist center in Eskdalemuir, Scotland, before returning to Africa

[9] In this regard, Thurman's autobiographical account of his early involvement with Buddhism contains strong echoes of many of the discursive dynamics discussed in the previous three chapters of the current work. That is, as Thurman explains in *Inner Revolution*, for approximately five years during the 1960s he virtually cut himself off from consumerism and popular culture, in the interest of immersing himself in the study of Buddhist philosophy and in the practice of meditation. However, although he maintains that he experienced great and persistent mental elation during this time of detachment, it is arguably quite telling that he characterizes this elation less in terms of deep *peace* and more in terms of *orgasm*. In short, such an unselfconscious equation of wisdom with sex seems to indicate the persistent implicit influence of the technology of the deployment of sexuality, and its transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption, Thurman's otherwise explicit detachment from the rest of the disciplinary/bio-power discursive domain, notwithstanding. While this, to some extent, is reminiscent of certain of the persistent disciplinary/bio-power discursive dynamics that continued to inform Govinda's subjectivity, despite his years of seclusion and meditation, Thurman's later dissatisfaction with his life in India, his desire for more ambitious endeavors in America, the manner in which he proceeded to pursue such desires, and his subsequent regret over the way in which his success in relation to them came at the cost of his earlier single-minded devotion, are all reminiscent of the issues and the guilt that plagued Blofeld (see note 4, Chapter Six). Similarly, like Blofeld, Thurman appears to have readily shouldered complete responsibility for the dissolution of such devotion, instead of understanding it as the consequence of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity. Thurman, *Inner Revolution*, 5–6, 9–17.

to teach meditation.[10] Admittedly, as Nairn confirmed in an interview in 2007, although he was familiar with some of Rampa's texts before his travels to India, such as, among others, *The Third Eye* and *Doctor from Lhasa*, he only later became acquainted with Blofeld's *The Wheel of Life*, and with Govinda's *The Way of the White Clouds*. Nevertheless, in addition to meeting John Blofeld in the late 1970s, Nairn was also subsequently drawn toward Govinda's various other works to such an extent that, by his own testimony, he read almost all of them. However, although greatly appreciative of the manner in which their respective literary endeavors brought Vajrayāna Buddhism to the attention of the West, Nairn is also critical of certain aspects of their representation of Buddhism. That is, he maintains, "They didn't seem to have a full understanding of what was involved in relating to Lamas, and how the devoted student of a High Lama needed to practice what they were taught; consequently, their presentation of Vajrayāna Buddhism was more intellectual than orientated around the true path of practice." [11]

In this regard, Nairn's work differs quite markedly from theirs insofar as it focuses on making Buddhist meditation, understood in a very general sense, accessible to Westerners in the contemporary era, via the provision of simple methods through and in terms of which it can be practiced. This much is clearly evinced by the contrast between the broad valorization of the liberating effects of pursuing and attaining sublime mystical visions, which occurs, to various degrees, in Rampa's, Blofeld's and Govinda's respective works, and Nairn's more modest approach to Buddhist meditation. That is, in both his *Tranquil Mind: An Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation* and his *Diamond Mind: Psychology of Meditation*, Nairn characterizes meditation simply as a way of engaging directly with the mind that, on account of its eminently practical nature, necessarily eschews any over-intellectualization of the process.[12] The latter point is also of significance insofar as it communicates a general disinterest in the sectarian divisions and tussles between different Buddhist schools. This is, of course, not to suggest that there is no mention of Buddhist philosophy in Nairn's own texts. Rather,

[10] Erika Van Greunen, "About the Author," in Rob Nairn, *Diamond Mind: Psychology of Meditation* (Cape Town: Kairon Press, 1998), 109.

[11] Interview by the author, Johannesburg, October 2007.

[12] Rob Nairn, *Tranquil Mind: An Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation* (Cape Town: Carrefour/Dragon Publications, 1994), 9; and Rob Nairn, *Diamond Mind: Psychology of Meditation* (Cape Town: Kairon Press, 1998), ix.

although the amount of Buddhist theory included in them has increased incrementally with each new publication, and although Nairn situates himself within the Kagyü school of Vajrayāna Buddhism, such theory, along with such a context, only ever constitute an addendum to the very practical issue of meditation and the establishment of a creative working relationship with the mind. The importance of this practical rather than doctrinal approach cannot be overstated, because it is entirely possible that, as a consequence of it, what Nairn in *Diamond Mind* terms the 'technological mind,' was able to move into conspicuousness.[13]

In short, following the *Satipatthāna Sutta*, Nairn focuses on mindfulness of the body, feelings, mental states and mental contents, and then proceeds to deal with the ways in which the mind tends to involve itself with thoughts through habits of rejection, negation and attachment.[14] Thus, Nairn's approach, although simple and direct, nevertheless continues to reflect the gist of more 'traditional' Buddhist works, such as the Hīnayāna (Theravāda) *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*.[15] Yet, having broached the fundamentals of meditation, so to speak, Nairn, very importantly, draws into conspicuousness a particular mindset which he has encountered among Western meditators, and which he refers to as the 'technological mind.' According to him, this 'technological mind' is characterized by severely augmented tendencies to reject and/or to negate the process of watching thoughts/emotions arise and pass, along with a similarly powerful tendency to attach to the idea of achieving rapid meditative progress through the manipulation of such thoughts/emotions. As such, Nairn thereby seems to suggest a distinction between the normal untrained mind and the technological mind, in terms of which the former constitutes a generic category used to designate a type of mind that is simply lacking in discipline, while the latter denotes a specific type of mind that, through its identification with the technological developments of the contemporary era, has actively *propagated* such a lack of discipline.[16] Yet, because Nairn's meditation practices are orientated around training the normal untrained mind, and because he regards the technological mind as an aggravated version of the normal untrained mind, the habits of the technological mind are not construed as insurmountable; rather, they are simply considered to

[13] Nairn, *Diamond Mind*, 23.
[14] Ibid., 37–40, 97.
[15] *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*, 31–40.
[16] Nairn, *Diamond Mind*, 23, 87.

be more challenging to engage with via meditation than the habits of the normal untrained mind. Accordingly, Nairn's strategy for engaging with them involves an intensification of the approach used to dissolve the habits of the normal untrained mind, that is, one that takes as its point of departure an understanding of the technological mind as an idiosyncratic rather than ubiquitous psychological aberration, and which generates around it an atmosphere of gentle playfulness, in an effort to disarm its proclivity for powerful reactivity.

However, because Nairn admits that the technological mind can seriously inhibit meditative progress for many years, all efforts to the contrary notwithstanding,[17] arguably, its seriousness as an obstacle to Buddhist meditation, and for that matter to Buddhist practice in general, is not matched by his rather vague account of it as simply the consequence of identification with the technological developments of the contemporary era. Similarly, although Nairn, via *Diamond Mind*, proffers a series of meditative practices as an antidote for the powerful dynamics of the technological mind,[18] the absence of any supporting theoretical appraisal of its origins casts significant doubt upon the efficacy of such practices, insofar as, without such a critical basis, these practices may well be orientated around a *symptom* of the problem rather than its *cause*. Indeed, through a more circumspect approach to the problem of the technological mind, it emerges quite clearly that this is precisely what has happened. That is, in maintaining that the cause of the technological mind is the *tendency*, on the part of (certain) contemporary Westerners, to identify with the technological developments of the contemporary era, a mere *symptom* of the discursive dynamics of the disciplinary/bio-power domain has erroneously been advanced as the *source* of the problem. Consequently, because Nairn's proffered remedial meditative practices address this *symptom*, their capacity to dissolve the actual *cause* of the problem is seriously undermined. In other words, by regarding the technological mind as an idiosyncratic psychological aberration on the part of *some* individuals, such that those individuals are construed as irreducibly responsible for having engendered such habits, the horizon of such remedial meditative practices never expands to include the disciplinary/bio-power discourses that continue to inform contemporary subjectivity around precisely such habits.

---

[17] Ibid., 24.
[18] Ibid., 25–26, 31, 59, 69, 76, 79–80, 86, 97.

To some extent, socially engaged Buddhism does approximate a possible way in which to overcome such limitations, insofar as it draws close to the idea that subjectivity can, at least partially, be influenced by broad politico-economic dynamics—such as globalization, Westernization, consumerism, transnational corporatism, etcetera—and insofar as it seeks to strategically address the negative aspects of such influence.[19] In short, the strategy of socially engaged Buddhism tends to be orientated largely around, on the one hand, the establishment of the connection between local social crises and global politico-economic dynamics, and, on the other hand, the exertion of remedial effort at the level of such local social crises, in the interest of effecting incremental change at the level of such global politico-economic dynamics. However, as will be discussed, unfortunately, although this particular strategy often involves highly creative articulations of spirituality with politics, socially engaged Buddhism in its current form also remains limited in a manner akin to Nairn's meditative practices. This is because, on account of its focus on broad politico-economic dynamics, it similarly fails to pay attention both to the disciplinary/bio-power discourses which covertly underpin such dynamics, and, consequently, to the role of such disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the formation of subjectivity.

Although there are now many authors who explicitly identify themselves as socially engaged Buddhists, and, for that matter, many more whose writings would at the level of popular consensus probably fall quite easily within the ambit of socially engaged Buddhism, arguably, two figures in particular, namely Thich Nhat Hanh and Sulak Sivaraksa, remain synonymous with the movement, and their respective writings neatly reflect the above mentioned strategy. This is, of course, not to assert that they merely echo one another through their various writings; on the contrary, the literary output of each figure contains a multiplicity of subtle shifts in political focus, along with a range of often related

[19] As David McMahan points out in *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, socially engaged Buddhism, which emerged in the latter half of the twentieth century, comprises of a dynamic rearticulation of Buddhism by means of which its traditional focus on the extension of compassion in relation to suffering, and the pursuit of liberation from such suffering, has become re-inscribed in social, economic and political terms. That is, apart from concerning itself with the provision of humanitarian aid to those in need, socially engaged Buddhism also concerns itself with the provision of organizational guidance to those who have been marginalized by, and negatively affected through, the rapid and drastic socio-cultural and politico-economic changes that have taken place, particularly in the 'developing' world, under the auspices of globalization. McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 251–252.

dynamic philosophical inflections. Indeed, in this regard, it is perhaps even possible to distinguish between the work of the two authors in terms of their different approaches to politics and spirituality. That is, on the one hand, while in Thich Nhat Hanh's work there occurs a *politicization of spirituality*, insofar as individual spiritual development is focused on as a means of obliquely ushering in generally positive political change, on the other hand, in Sulak Sivaraksa's work there occurs a *spiritualization of politics*, insofar as specific forms of political activism emerge as transformative spiritual practices in their own right. However, this difference notwithstanding, arguably, the respective social engagement, on the part of these two Buddhist authors, remains limited by the *generality* of the parameters of the broad politico-economic dynamics which they both construe as contributing significantly to various local social crises, and which they both consequently seek to change incrementally through the exertion of remedial effort at the level of such local social crises. In other words, in each case, the *generality* of the parameters of the broad politico-economic dynamics of globalization, Westernization, consumerism, and transnational corporatism, among others, functions to eclipse the *specific* role of disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the formation of subjectivity. This, in turn, not only unwittingly augments the capacity of such disciplinary/bio-power discourses to function in this way, through allowing them to operate undetected. In addition, it also concomitantly prevents the subsequent discovery of such disciplinary/bio-power discourses, because it affords socially engaged Buddhists the (erroneous) idea that they are already grappling directly with the most basic sources of all social ills. In short, as already discussed in relation to Foucault's "Power and Sex," Foucault's contention concerning this is that, while such a reduction of politics to economics remains a valid initial step to take, if one fails to proceed further, to an examination of the configurations of power that constitute and underpin the economic relations thus identified, one simply allows such configurations to continue operating covertly as powerful determining factors.[20]

To begin with, Thich Nhat Hanh is widely construed as the originator of socially engaged Buddhism, insofar as the movement emerged in the 1950s largely in the wake of his various endeavors to augment the social relevance of Buddhism in a rapidly changing world. Understandably,

[20] Foucault, "Power and Sex," 118–119.

what this required was not only a great deal of dynamism and innovation on his part, but also a significant degree of iconoclasm. This was because, in the interest of effective social engagement, it became necessary not only to creatively embellish upon certain aspects of 'traditional' Buddhism, but also to jettison other aspects of it, namely those which couched 'traditional' Buddhism in purely apolitical terms in a manner that kept it at a remove from socio-economic suffering. Arguably, this much is neatly evinced in *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy and Liberation*, where Thich Nhat Hanh not only recalls the inspired and energetic efforts on the part of socially engaged Buddhists in Vietnam to address various humanitarian crises,[21] but also repeatedly presents as a paragon of virtue the Buddhist monk Thich Quang Duc, because of the way in which his televised self-immolation made the world more mindful of the escalating violence in Vietnam.[22] Although Thich Nhat Hanh's failure to advance any moral censure in relation to the latter, horrific, event does constitute a somewhat controversial point in his text, the absence of such criticism may well be the consequence of his implicit foregrounding of the role of such spectacle in the above mentioned strategy of socially engaged Buddhism. That is, the televised spectacle of Thich Quang Duc's self-immolation serves as a good illustration of socially engaged Buddhist activity *not* because of the violence it entailed, which remains terribly unfortunate, but rather because of the strategy that informed it. In terms of this, the provision of an example of profound equanimity in the middle of incredible torment, in response to a local social crisis, served as a source of inspiration to millions of people around the globe to question the legitimacy of the prevailing politico-economic dynamics, because of the role of such dynamics in precipitating such a local social crisis. Indeed, Thich Nhat Hanh's emphasis on the importance of meditatively transforming oneself, in order to provide others with a positive example to follow, continues to echo through even his relatively late lectures, such as *Be Free Where You Are*,[23] in a way that, perhaps, intimates the powerful and enduring symbolic effect of Thich Quang Duc's immense sacrifice. Admittedly, at first glance, *Be Free Where You Are* seems a cruelly condescending title for a lecture delivered to

---

[21] Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy and Liberation* (London: Rider, 1998), 202–205.
[22] Ibid., 81, 191.
[23] Thich Nhat Hanh, *Be Free Where You Are* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2002), 29.

prisoners at the Maryland Correctional Institution at Hagerstown.[24] However, as the text proceeds, it becomes increasingly evident that such freedom is couched solidly in terms of a growing appreciation of the inextricable interconnectedness of absolutely everything, which is in no way mitigated by prison walls, and which, in turn, allows for moments of meditative practice in even the loneliest prison cell to ultimately have an enduringly positive social effect at a global level.[25] In fact, in this regard, Thich Nhat Hanh not only cites the efficacy of his own simple practice of mindfulness as a tool of political resistance against the Vietnam War, but also, similarly, advances the socially transformative power of individual or small group meditative practice within any prison.[26] However, despite this *politicization of spirituality*, in terms of which individual spiritual development is focused on as a means of obliquely ushering in generally positive political change, Thich Nhat Hanh's frame of reference remains primarily politico-economic in nature. That is, while in *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching*, he decries the negative effects of advertising and consumerism on one's capacity to develop mindfulness,[27] in *Be Free Where You Are*, he advances prison life as beneficial in a manner akin to monastic life, precisely because it provides one with the chance to develop mindfulness, by separating one from the constant media barrage to which one is otherwise subject in any given capitalist society.[28] As such, ironically, even within the very bowels of the quintessential disciplinary institution, namely the prison, Thich Nhat Hanh appears to remain blind both to the relations of power at work within it, and to the ways in which such relations of power are not limited to the prison, but are rather mirrored in the organization and administration of disciplinary/bio-power society at large. Understandably, the latter equivalence severely problematizes his somewhat idealistic distinction between the domain of the prison and the domain of the outside world.

To a large extent, the same strategy of acting locally in the interest of effecting global change is reflected in the writings of Sulak Sivaraksa. As Sivaraksa himself recalls in *Loyalty Demands Dissent: Autobiography of an Engaged Buddhist*, after his first-hand experience of the cultural

[24] Ibid., vii.
[25] Ibid., 5, 12, 15–16, 42–44.
[26] Ibid., 15, 36–37.
[27] Thich Nhat Hanh, *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching*, 32–33, 91, 96–98.
[28] Thich Nhat Hanh, *Be Free Where You Are*, 18, 36.

destruction that occurred in Bangkok in the wake of development initiatives, he not only became actively involved in the organization of resistance against such initiatives; in addition, he also went further by establishing and lending his support to organizations such as the Asian Cultural Forum on Development (ACFOD), in the interest of engendering discussion about possible alternatives to the development principle.[29] Indeed, for Sivaraksa, so great is the need for the creation of such alternatives that he even dedicated his autobiography both to this enterprise and to the hope that, through its success, Thailand will one day be able to function as a model for other nations, in a manner that will ultimately encourage and usher in positive global change.[30] Admittedly, though, in this regard, one also finds in Sivaraksa's work a certain diminishment of emphasis on the private, quiet development of mindfulness, in favor of an increased emphasis on the need to clearly articulate points of political contestation. Yet, arguably, this subtle shift in emphasis is in keeping with the conditions under which Sivaraksa's work developed, which were in many ways markedly different from those under which Thich Nhat Hanh's work grew to maturity. That is, unlike Thich Nhat Hanh, who has spent the greater part of his life as a Buddhist monk, Sivaraksa, in *Loyalty Demands Dissent*, explains that, although he spent nearly two years as a novice Buddhist monk during his childhood,[31] the rest of his life has been variously divided up between the secular realms of university education, broadcasting, legal study, publishing, and political organization. In short, after studying at tertiary institutions in the United Kingdom and working for the BBC, Sivaraksa became a barrister in 1961, before returning to Thailand where, among other things, he taught philosophy at Thammasat University and became a key figure in the publication of the *Social Science Review*.[32] Subsequent to this, he not only became increasingly active in the publication and distribution of socially critical material, but also, in keeping with the leftist stance of such undertakings, became increasingly involved with a number of socio-political organizations, such as the Siam Society and the Society for the Conservation of National Treasures and the

[29] Sulak Sivaraksa, *Loyalty Demands Dissent: Autobiography of an Engaged Buddhist* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1998), 29, 54–55, 143–145, 156–158.
[30] Ibid., xvii.
[31] Ibid., 15.
[32] Ibid., 45, 49, 57, 70–79.

Environment (SCONTE).[33] As such, Sivaraksa's later influence on the formation of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), understandably, led to it being orientated more around social activism and less around meditation.[34] Indeed, in relation to this, it should be recalled that, while Sivaraksa himself utilized the first Pacific Ashram held in Malaysia for intellectual endeavor rather than for meditation, similarly, he perceived the subsequent establishment of the permanent Wongsanit Ashram in Bangkok as a domain for engendering the intellectual work of social activism, rather than as a domain for the development of meditative mindfulness in the 'traditional' Buddhist sense.[35] However, Sivaraksa's creative rearticulation of Buddhism in this way should perhaps also be understood as partially determined by his long-term exposure to a series of reformist, critical and debunking dynamics within and in relation to the 'traditional' Buddhism of his homeland. That is, not only did he work as part of a reformist movement that sought to develop monks' comprehension of the growing social issues that surrounded them; in addition, through doing so, he also found himself confronted, on the one hand, with the rather extreme iconoclasm of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, and, on the other hand, with mounting pressure from radical left-wing student elements that sought to debunk Buddhism as an anachronism and advance Marxism as the way of the future.[36] Although it would be difficult to gauge the extent to which each of these different factors subsequently influenced Sivaraksa's work, arguably, their collective influence is rather palpable in *Conflict, Culture, Change: Engaged Buddhism in a Globalizing World*. This is especially the case when, in this text, Sivaraksa asserts that to seek one's personal salvation is to miss the point of Buddhism, because, insofar as the focus of Buddhism falls on the pursuit of the salvation of all sentient beings at a multiplicity of levels, it is by default indissociable from the pursuit of political salvation, rather than personal salvation.[37] As such, at least to some extent, it is possible to advance that, in contrast to the work of Thich Nhat Hanh, in which there occurs a *politicization of spirituality*, in Sivaraksa's work there occurs

---

[33] Ibid., 113–120.
[34] Ibid., 188–190.
[35] Ibid., 98–100, 182–186.
[36] Ibid., 87–92, 140–141.
[37] Sulak Sivaraksa, *Conflict, Culture, Change: Engaged Buddhism in a Globalizing World* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2005), 40–41.

a *spiritualization of politics*, in terms of which specific forms of political activism emerge as transformative spiritual practices in their own right. Admittedly, such an assertion may meet with partial resistance, because of certain evidence to the contrary; that is, while in his *Loyalty Demands Dissent*, Sivaraksa valorizes Thich Nhat Hanh as an acclaimed Buddhist spokesperson, exemplar, mentor and even friend,[38] in his more recent *Conflict, Culture, Change*, he similarly valorizes the meditative development of mindfulness as a crucial means of liberation.[39] However, upon closer inspection, it emerges quite clearly that while, in the former work, Sivaraksa articulates mindfulness in social terms, such that it becomes virtually synonymous with socio-political circumspection in relation to the economic temptations of Western modernization,[40] in the latter work, he similarly articulates mindfulness as a remedial societal practice for social ills like consumerism, such that it becomes almost analogous to a broad cultural practice of politico-economic prudence.[41] Yet, despite such *spiritualization of politics*, as is evident from the above, much like Thich Nhat Hanh, Sivaraksa's frame of reference remains primarily politico-economic in nature, which seems to blind him to the dynamics of disciplinary/bio-power. This is quite neatly evinced by the way in which, even in his *Loyalty Demands Dissent*, he continues to regard institutions such as prisons and reformatories in a manner akin to Thich Nhat Hanh—in other words, as places *separated* off from society and characterized by *special* conditions, the discomfort of which it is possible to ameliorate through the occasional extension of humanitarian aid.[42] That is, like Thich Nhat Hanh, Sivaraksa fails to grasp that these are places informed by the very same relations of power that pervade disciplinary/bio-power society at large.

Thus, insofar as they draw close to the idea that subjectivity can, at least partially, be influenced by broad politico-economic dynamics, and insofar as they seek to strategically address the negative aspects of such influence, the above forms of socially engaged Buddhism do approximate a possible way in which to overcome the limitations that plague Nairn's meditative practices. Yet, ultimately, they fail to overcome such limitations because the *generality* of the parameters of such

[38] Sivaraksa, *Loyalty Demands Dissent*, 100, 118, 147, 156, 161, 178, 183.
[39] Sivaraksa, *Conflict, Culture, Change*, 4–5.
[40] Sivaraksa, *Loyalty Demands Dissent*, 179.
[41] Sivaraksa, *Conflict, Culture, Change*, 41.
[42] Sivaraksa, *Loyalty Demands Dissent*, 109.

broad politico-economic dynamics eclipses the *specific* role of disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the formation of subjectivity.

However, this not only results in the continued constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict; in addition, it also results in contemporary subjectivity being informed around tendencies that are completely inimical to meditation. In fact, the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier, panopticism, the deployment of sexuality, and secularized/medicalized confession, along with their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, inform subjectivity around exactly those habits detailed by Nairn as characteristic of the technological mind; namely, augmented tendencies toward rejection, negation and attachment that are highly resistant to dissolution through meditative practice. Arguably, this occurs at both a relative and a more primary level, so to speak, with the specific disciplinary/bio-power technology in question informing subjectivity at a relative level, while its associated transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption does the same at a more primary level.[43]

Firstly, an augmented habit of rejection is inculcated in contemporary subjects at a relative level by the disciplinary technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier and panopticism, all of which operate in terms of the idea of the individual as a thoroughly autonomous being who is culpable for his/her actions. As such, while disciplinary spatial regimentation habituates in subjects the tendency to completely reject movements that are outside of the boundaries of (arbitrarily) designated spaces, disciplinary temporal regimentation develops the same habit of rejection in relation to movements that are outside of the boundaries of (arbitrarily) designated times. In addition to the more obvious forms of disciplinary spatial regimentation informed by the principles of enclosure, partitioning and functional sites, discussed in Chapter Two, there exists a vast multiplicity of other everyday activities that are equally regimented, but that tend to go largely unnoticed because they are construed as integral parts of 'normal' existence and social activity. These range from, for example, relatively simple activities, such as writing between the printed lines on a folio page, to relatively

[43] Of course, this in no way imbues the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption in question with *atemporality*, because its capacity to inform subjectivity is always necessarily historically and discursively determined, and hence limited.

complex activities, such as driving and parking a motor vehicle between the painted lines in urban areas, all of which can be understood as informing subjectivity around the habitual rejection of options that are contrary to the given norm in each case. Similarly, the more well-known forms of disciplinary temporal regimentation informed by the principles of the timetable, the temporal elaboration of the act, the correlation of the body and the gesture, the body-object articulation, and the principle of exhaustive use, also discussed in Chapter Two, not only inform subjectivity around the general tendency to measure all activities in terms of timeframes. In addition, they also inform subjectivity around the habitual rejection of those activities that seem to require too much time or that have timeframes which are too vaguely defined to fit neatly within a given schedule. Understandably, such rejection is ensured not only by the dossier, which stands ready to inscribe any overt failure to reject such alternatives, but also by panopticism, the constant and penetrating *gaze* of which has a capacity to detect even the most covert failure in this regard. Moreover, as illustrated in the previous chapter, while relative resistance to such technologies is conceivable, it often amounts to little more than a token gesture, because, at a more primary level, the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of evolutive historicity, which underpins all three of the above mentioned technologies, continues to engender in subjectivity an immensely strong habit of rejection. That is, on account of its constant deference to a form of social salvation in the future, and on account of the ostensible self-evidence, and hence ubiquitous legitimacy, with which this deference has been imbued, evolutive historicity informs subjectivity around a far more primary habit of rejection than the three above mentioned technologies, namely the habit of implicitly rejecting the present in favor of such a future, which by definition can never be arrived at.

Secondly, an augmented habit of negation is inculcated in contemporary subjects at a relative level by the technology of the deployment of sexuality, which, at least to a certain extent, operates against the backdrop of the idea of the individual as a rationally autonomous being. Accordingly, in the interest of the greater health of the social body, the individual is required to habitually negate those sexual thoughts or proclivities that do not fall within the normative prescriptions of bio-power. In turn, this habit is further engendered through the way in which failure to perform such negation leads, either formally or informally, to interminable relegation to one of the categories associated with

the supposedly problematic three of the four anchorage points of the deployment of sexuality.[44] Conversely, having been relegated to such a category, or having relegated oneself to such a category, a similar process of negation can readily occur in relation to those sexual thoughts or proclivities associated with the fourth, supposedly benign anchorage point of the hypothetical heterosexual couple who engage only in reproductive sex.[45] That is, for example, while the idea of homosexuality can potentially be experienced as anathema by one who has identified him/herself with the category of heterosexuality, conversely, the idea of being part of a heterosexual, procreative couple can potentially be experienced as anathema by one who has identified him/herself with the category of homosexuality. Moreover, at a more primary level, and in addition to such relative negation, the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of the deployment of sexuality, namely the idea that the body is infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth, informs subjectivity around an immensely strong habit of negation. This is because of the way in which this assumption obliges the contemporary subject to negate all evidence of the similarity between all bodies of a particular gender, the obvious limitation of sex to the ordinary realm of the physical, its blatantly repetitive dynamics, and the temporary and utterly predictable nature of its pleasure. In turn, on the basis of such negation, and in the interest of social acceptance within the disciplinary/bio-power domain, contemporary subjects are then required, either implicitly or explicitly, to inflect their speech and actions in a way that adequately confers upon the individual body the status of being somehow unique, mysterious, and a repository of transcendent sexual power and truth.

Thirdly, an augmented habit of attachment is inculcated in contemporary subjects at a relative level by the way in which, as discussed in Chapter Three, secularized/medicalized confession, from the eighteenth century onward, has both increasingly advanced the idea of the individual as incapable of exercising rational autonomy in perpetuity, and increasingly accounted for such an incapacity in terms of the concept of latency. The importance of this, in turn, derives from the way in which the concept of latency opened up the space for a *decipherment of the subject*. In effect, as Foucault indicates in *The Hermeneutics of*

[44] See note 7, Chapter Two.
[45] See note 7, Chapter Two.

the Subject, the implementation of such *decipherment of the subject* led to the dissolution of the legacy of *self-transparency* around which the first/second century C.E. Hellenistic/Roman 'cultures of the self' had been orientated, and which had until the seventeenth century survived in modulated form in the *self-decipherment* of Christian pastoral power.[46] However, this not only resulted in the formation of subjects who were no longer invested with the capacity to decipher themselves, and who, consequently, were required to defer to the authority of the psychiatrist in this regard. In addition, the actual dynamics involved in the process of such *decipherment of the subject* concomitantly foster in contemporary subjects the habit of attaching to certain thoughts and emotions, as 'signifiers' of ostensibly elusive and enigmatic latent mental tendencies. That is, not only has it become imperative to attach to such 'signifiers' because of the perceived threat to autonomy otherwise posed by the latent mental tendencies that they allegedly allude to. In addition, such attachment has also been endorsed through the idea that such threats can only be diffused through the mechanical process of speech, undertaken in conjunction with an equally mechanical series of clinical listening methods, because such a process and such methods are predicated upon, and indeed demand, such attachment, before they can be undertaken and employed, respectively. Admittedly, at a local level, that is, in relation to a particular secularized/medicalized confession, such relative attachment can conceivably be relinquished over time, in the wake of either a failure to resolve the issue in question, or an inflection of such an issue in a new direction that necessitates different attachments. However, even where this is the case, arguably, the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of secularized/medicalized confession, namely the idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth to which authority must always be deferred, continues to inform subjectivity around an augmented habit of attachment, through a powerful endorsement of such deference as a matter of principle.

As such, even if, hypothetically speaking, Nairn's meditative practices had the capacity, *within* the meditation domain, to moderate some of the harshness of the above mentioned three reactive habits, the cost of regarding the technological mind exclusively as an idiosyncratic psychological aberration, in a manner that fails to acknowledge the

[46] Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 218–222.

role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, would emerge when the individuals in question *exit* the meditation domain. At this point, their recent meditative 'success' notwithstanding, the disciplinary/bio-power imperatives which are indissociable from the language, customs, organization, and architecture of the contemporary era (but to which such individuals remain blind) would with complete impunity simply inform their subjectivity once more around such augmented habits of rejection, negation and attachment. Of course, the above distinction between the meditation domain and the disciplinary/bio-power domain is entirely artificial, since, in the absence of the critical edge of discourse analysis, the imperatives of the latter simply infiltrate and implicitly inform meditative practice in the former. Indeed, a notable result of the above oversight appears to be the development of guilt among meditators, which Nairn in *Diamond Mind* characterizes as an entirely Western cultural product, but which he fails to elaborate upon.[47] That is, the development of such guilt can be accounted for quite easily in terms of a growing awareness, on the part of meditators, of a persistent inability to practice in public, or for that matter in the meditation domain, what they, in a sense, profess in private, along with a concomitant tendency to readily shoulder responsibility for such a deficit. All of this follows in the wake of an appraisal of the technological mind as an exclusively idiosyncratic psychological aberration, rather than as an ubiquitous discursive construct.

However, if the technological mind is understood as being synonymous with contemporary subjectivity, and if contemporary subjectivity is understood as a discursive construct that is problematic—on account of the way in which it has been constituted as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict—then a possible four-fold strategy emerges through and in terms of which this problematic subjectivity can be addressed. In short, this strategy comprises of, firstly, an acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, secondly, the adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice, thirdly, the use of Buddhist meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity in association with such discourse analysis, and, fourthly, a commitment to problematize the production of 'truth' through disciplinary/bio-power. Respectively, this involves the establishment of a tentative political division between the meditation domain and the

[47] Nairn, *Diamond Mind*, 28.

disciplinary/bio-power domain, the identification of the discourses of the latter within the context of the former, the de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity through meditative practice *within* the meditation domain, and the de-stabilization of the disciplinary/bio-power monologue through the practice of discursive transgression *outside* of the meditation domain. On the one hand, the realization of such a strategy would be indissociable from the emergence of a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, which would distinguish itself from other forms of socially engaged Buddhism insofar as its focus would fall on engendering discursive transformation, rather than on the provision of charitable aid and/or the propagation of politico-economic antagonism. However, on the other hand, despite this difference, because of the eminently social effects of such discursive transformation, this new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism cannot be completely dissociated from the realm of socially engaged Buddhism, and hence is obliged to reflect such an affiliation in its name.

To begin with, the first part of the proposed strategy, namely an acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, and the concomitant establishment of a tentative political division between the meditation domain and the disciplinary/bio-power domain, will conceivably meet with some opposition. This is because, as Richard King points out in *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'the Mystic East,'* for a long time now, a prevailing suspicion has existed in the West about the validity of linking religion and politics in such a manner. In short, this prejudice is largely the consequence of the de-politicization of religion that occurred during the Enlightenment, via the narrow definition of religion solely in terms of a spiritual essence, which gained significant currency around this time. Accordingly, this definition both set in motion a progressive bias against including religion within the domain of political power, and thereby laid the foundation for the development and eventual emergence of the politically impotent privatized forms of religion that pervade contemporary society.[48] As such, the first part of the proposed strategy would involve a thematization of both such a prejudice and its historical origins, in the interest of problematizing its legitimacy and subsequently re-politicizing religious

[48] Richard King, *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'the Mystic East'* (London: Routledge, 2008), 10–11, 13.

practice in general, and Buddhist practice in particular. In relation to this, it should be remembered that, even though it became construed as problematic from the Enlightenment onward, the idea of a political division between a religious space and its surrounding social space is not without precedent in the history of Buddhism. That is, as Malcolm Voyce points out in "The Vinaya and the Dharmasastra: Monastic Law and Legal Pluralism in Ancient India," there always existed an element of negotiation between the *Mulasarvastivada-Vinaya* and the *Dharmasastra*, rather than any complete and uncritical acquiescence on the part of the former to the dictates of the latter. Moreover, on account of the way in which the *Dharmasastra* included within its ambit socio-cultural, religious and intellectual concerns,[49] it arguably constitutes a particularly good example to work with in this regard. This is because disciplinary/bio-power discourses, even though they may not be explicitly and succinctly formulated in a manner akin to the *Dharmasastra*, nevertheless include similar concerns within their ambit. As such, the above mentioned relationship between the *Mulasarvastivada-Vinaya* and the *Dharmasastra* in ancient India constitutes a clear historical precedent upon which practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism could draw, in the interest of legitimating their establishment of a tentative political division between the meditation domain and the disciplinary/bio-power domain.

Secondly, through such an acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity and the concomitant establishment of a tentative political division between the meditation domain and the disciplinary/bio-power domain, the stage would be set for the adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice, in the interest of identifying disciplinary/bio-power discourses within the context of the meditation domain. That is, in terms of this *critical* avenue, the formation of subjectivity would be engaged with conceptually via discourse analyses that seek to render the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their conflicting notions of autonomy, along with the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions, comprehensible to practitioners. Arguably, this communal feature constitutes a crucial element of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, insofar as, without it, such

[49] Malcolm Voyce, "The Vinaya and the Dharmasastra: Monastic Law and Legal Pluralism in Ancient India," *Journal of Legal Pluralism* 56 (2007): 33–65.

discourse analysis would run the risk of remaining a mere intellectualist trend within the broader context of socially engaged Buddhism. In order to avoid such a risk, this communal feature opens up the possibility for an increasingly widespread and multilayered critical capacity to be developed among growing numbers of practitioners, rather than remaining the preserve of a few. Although all of the previous chapters in this book constitute part of such an endeavor, understandably, this critical avenue involves an interminable process of further research, contemplation and discussion, not only because of the need to complement and expand upon existing theory, but also because the changing nature of the discursive terrain will invariably render any existing theory redundant at some or other point in time.

Arguably, the introduction of such a critical avenue should not be construed as the import into Buddhism of Western intellectualism, but rather as the revitalization of an intellectual element of Buddhist practice that has suffered severe depletion wherever Buddhism has been appropriated in the contemporary West. For example, on the one hand, in relation to Tibetan Buddhism, Donald Lopez recalls in *Prisoners of Shangri-La* how, instead of being a private and exclusively meditative affair, the 'traditional' Geluk curriculum involved not only the academic study of canonical Buddhist texts, but also their memorization to the point where their arguments could be wielded in public scholarly debate—the entire process of which could take as long as twenty years.[50] However, on the other hand, in terms of the Western appropriation of Tibetan Buddhism, it is not uncommon for Western university students to graduate with little more than the entrance level canonical knowledge of a twelve-year-old Geluk novice.[51] Similarly, on the one hand, in "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," Robert Sharf points out how, instead of any exclusive focus on meditative epiphanies of emptiness, there exists a strong literary/contemplative focus in 'traditional' Zen involving the use of *koans*, which makes it at least as philosophical and conceptual in orientation as it is meditative.[52] However, on the other hand, in "Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions," Sharf goes on to explain that, to cater for the lack,

---

[50] Lopez, *Prisoners of Shangri-La*, 167–168.

[51] Ibid., 169.

[52] Robert H. Sharf, "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism," in *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 107–108.

on the part of contemporary Westerners, of the necessary cultural and linguistic acumen to partake in the more literary/contemplative aspects of 'traditional' Zen, in *Sanbōkyōdan* Zen such philosophical and conceptual components have been subject to immense abbreviation and simplification.[53] Moreover, as David McMahan advances in *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, although a widespread marketing of Western translations of canonical Buddhist texts has occurred in recent years, this has inadvertently introduced an entirely new textual practice into Buddhism that has dissolved both the pedagogic hierarchies through which such texts were traditionally accessed, and the erstwhile restrictions on access to such texts which derived from their previous limited distribution.[54] As such, while it is important to counter the intellectual depletion in contemporary Western Buddhism that is thematized by Lopez and Sharf, in the light of McMahan's assertion, it would arguably make little sense for contemporary Western Buddhists, under the impetus of Orientalism and nostalgia, to attempt to do so by naïvely pursuing the reconstruction of 'traditional' Buddhist curricula *in* Western language translations. Thus, what is being suggested in the current work is that the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism prioritizes the discursive analysis of Western cultural texts over engagement with 'traditional' Buddhist texts, without, of course, excluding the latter from consideration. That is, what is being argued for here is that such translated canonical Buddhist texts be studied within the context of those Western cultural texts that reflect disciplinary/bio-power discourses. This is imperative not only because of the role of such disciplinary/bio-power discourses in the constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict, but also because of the consequent crucial relationship between such conflict and Westerners' growing interest in Western language translations of canonical Buddhist texts, in the first place. Moreover, insofar as such an approach to Western cultural texts is predicated on the idea of subjectivity as orientated around the 'empty center' of *śūnyatā*,[55] it involves a dynamic political application of Buddhist philosophy, rather than its static apolitical elevation to the level of a fetish. In this regard, a distinct resonance exists between such an application and the practice of

[53] Robert H. Sharf, "Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22/3–4 (1995): 427–432.

[54] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 17.

[55] See note 27, Introduction.

contemporary philosophy, which, as Foucault advances in "Power and Sex," struggles permanently to comprehend the nature of contemporary discursive movement, and how such discursive movement has produced our subjectivity with its peculiar predilections and aversions.[56]

Thirdly, through such an adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice, in the interest of identifying disciplinary/bio-power discourses within the context of the meditation domain, the stage would be set for the use of Buddhist meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity in association with such discourse analysis, and the concomitant de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity through meditative practice *within* the meditation domain. That is, on the one hand, the critical avenue discussed above underpins this *meditative* avenue, insofar as its discourse analyses identify both the relative and the more primary disciplinary/bio-power imperatives that constitute contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict. However, on the other hand, this meditative avenue constitutes a crucial complement to the above critical avenue, insofar as it allows for a subsequent direct meditative observation of, and consequent gradual relinquishment of, the tendency to identify—via augmented habits of rejection, negation and attachment—with such imperatives. As such, although the Foucaultian orientation of such meditation is clear, following Richard King's *Orientalism and Religion*, it is not couched in the idea that all possible domains of human experience can and must be accounted for in terms of discursive constitution.[57] Rather, it leaves open the possibility that one particular domain of human experience, namely the domain of meditative observation, not only resides beyond such constitutive influence, but can also be utilized to undermine such constitutive influence.[58] This domain should not, however, be confused with some pseudo-esoteric mind-state conjured up against the backdrop of 'New Age' mysticism, because, on the contrary, it amounts to little more than the ordinary capacity of the mind to watch the spontaneous arising and passing of thoughts, without identifying, via the habits of rejection, negation and attachment, with such thoughts. In other words,

---

[56] Foucault, "Power and Sex," 121.

[57] King, *Orientalism and Religion*, 172.

[58] Actually, in "Practicing Criticism," Foucault, quite unequivocally, advances the independence of *thought* in this regard. Michel Foucault, "Practicing Criticism" (1981), in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977–1984*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York: Routledge, 1990), 155.

what is being suggested here is a very modest practice of meditation that remains entirely on the threshold of the *jhānas* of 'early' and Hīnayāna (Theravāda) Buddhism, so to speak, insofar as it does not necessarily proceed toward them at any stage. Arguably, this ordinary capacity of the mind, and the accompanying relaxed observation of thoughts at play, is something with which none are entirely unfamiliar, but of which relatively few people develop a significant awareness, presumably because of the negative disciplinary/bio-power association of such activity with idleness. Nevertheless, it is through the development of this ordinary capacity of the mind that disciplinary/bio-power imperatives, once they have been identified through discourse analysis, move into conspicuousness at a *personal* level, insofar as they can be seen arising and passing as inclinations and preoccupations during meditation. That is, insofar as they are meditatively observed *at* play, in their spontaneous arising and passing, they are robbed of their capacity to inform subjectivity; until, of course, the meditator in question begins to identify with them once more through the habits of rejection, negation and attachment.

However, because the relative imperatives of the various disciplinary/bio-power technologies always ultimately defer to the more primary imperatives of their respective *transcendent* orientated implicit founding assumptions, to gradually relinquish the tendency to identify with all such imperatives, through the practice of the above meditation, is also to become more *present* in the moment. That is, one becomes more present in the moment, or, in other words, one approximates *immanent* reflexivity, in proportion to the degree to which one relinquishes the *transcendent* orientation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity. Understandably, this use of Buddhist meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity, in association with the discourse analysis of the above critical avenue, stands to be concomitant with the de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity. This is because relinquishing the tendency to identify, via the augmented habits of rejection, negation, and attachment, with disciplinary/bio-power imperatives, not only dissolves the discursive momentum behind such imperatives. In addition, because such discursive momentum informs disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity, such dissolution also amounts to the de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity.

Yet, it would be incorrect to view such approximation of immanent reflexivity through Buddhist meditation, and such de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity, *exclusively* in terms of individualistic

'deconstruction,' or the peeling back of the onion layers of subjectivity, so to speak, in the interest of approximating its 'empty center.' That is, while the idea of *śūnyatā*, or the 'empty center' of subjectivity, is, of course, not dispensed with in the proposed form of meditation, to pursue it does not constitute an exclusive end-in-itself. Instead, it functions as the backdrop that makes possible the radical transformation of subjectivity, insofar as it negates the idea of any fundamental human nature that might otherwise resist such transformation. In other words, the meditative de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity does not entail the creation of a silent, vacuous and catatonic subject. Rather, any meditative de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity is indissociable from the formation of an alternative subjectivity, if only because, at some or other point in time, one is always obliged to cease meditating and to start *speaking*. The question, therefore, quite simply revolves around what one through meditation learns to *say*. It is in this sense that an immense affinity exists between such meditation and Foucault's idea of problematization, as articulated in his "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations," insofar as such meditation, in effect, constitutes the most subtle and intimate site of problematization imaginable. That is, according to Foucault, problematization, which he considers to be the particular work of thought, differs from habit in that it does not involve reacting to problems in a predictable knee-jerk manner that simply bears testimony to their existence and the degree of their gravity. Rather, problematization involves the creative formulation of an array of new possibilities of response to the problems at hand, in terms of which what was previously a given is transformed into a question that in turn requires a response.[59] Similarly, the meditative de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity does not involve reacting to both the relative and the more primary disciplinary/bio-power imperatives through identifying with them in the same way as before, the habit of which previously led to the constitution of one's subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict. Rather, through such meditation, each of these imperatives is allowed to arise and pass in turn, without being identified with via augmented habits of rejection, negation and attachment, because of the way in which the legitimacy

[59] Michel Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations" (1984), in *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 2000), 118.

of each as a given has been called into question through the discourse analysis of the critical avenue, discussed earlier. In this regard, one's approximation of immanent reflexivity in relation to such imperatives would not only be in proportion to the degree to which one develops meditative awareness of the nuanced ways in which these imperatives arise at a personal level. In addition, it would also be in proportion to the degree to which one develops meditative awareness of both the nuanced ways in which one tends to identify with such imperatives, and the nuanced ways in which one's life, through previous identification, has become imbricated with them. The importance of this, in turn, derives from the manner in which such growing insights allow for the creative formulation of an array of new possibilities of response to both the relative and the more primary disciplinary/bio-power imperatives; that is, new possibilities of response which are not simply formulated at a conceptual level, but rather engendered over time at the more powerful level of the discursive habits that inform subjectivity, such that their propagation is indissociable from the creative transformation of subjectivity.

As such, the practical focus of this meditative avenue, at least to some extent, resonates with aspects of Jeremy Carrette and Richard King's *Selling Spirituality*, insofar as it takes as its point of departure the idea that Buddhist enlightenment simply involves the progressive attainment of *immanent* reflexivity, and the consequent gradual transformation of one's behavior in relation to one's growing understanding of the world.[60] Yet, in doing so, it is not only significantly distinct from what Richard King, in *Orientalism and Religion*, outlines as the primary Western theoretical trajectory that, under the influence of William James, has hitherto understood meditation in terms of ineffable numinous experiences that border, at times, on the preternatural.[61] In addition, it is also significantly distinct from what David McMahan, in *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, identifies as the popularization of meditation within Buddhist modernism—a popularization which stands in stark contrast to the erstwhile limited and highly specialized role of meditation within 'traditional' Buddhism.[62] That is, what is being proposed in the current work contrasts with this new popular inflection

[60] Carrette and King, *Selling Spirituality*, 114.
[61] King, *Orientalism and Religion*, 161.
[62] McMahan, *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*, 183–184.

of meditation, which, as some critics have advanced, is orientated less around the dissolution of the illusion of selfhood in the 'traditional' Buddhist sense, and more around the production of a new selfhood that is distinguished by its heightened self-awareness and, indeed, its self-infatuation.[63] This is because, instead of involving open-ended self-reflexivity in relation to one's feelings, in a way that implicitly reifies both such feelings and one's increasing awareness of them, the form of meditation being proposed here involves the increasing approximation of immanent reflexivity in relation to both the relative and the more primary disciplinary/bio-power imperatives, deference to the authority of which otherwise habitually characterizes one's experience of subjectivity.

Fourthly, through such use of Buddhist meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity in association with discourse analysis, and the concomitant de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity through meditative practice *within* the meditation domain, the stage would finally be set for a commitment to problematize the production of 'truth' through disciplinary/bio-power, via the de-stabilization of the disciplinary/bio-power monologue through the practice of discursive transgression *outside* of the meditation domain. Conceivably, this would, in turn, involve a three-fold interrelated process. Firstly, via both the critical avenue and the meditative avenue discussed above, it is possible that the practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism will be able to develop not only a growing awareness of disciplinary/bio-power technologies, and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions. In addition, it is also possible that they will be able to develop a growing awareness both of their own tendencies to identify with the associated imperatives of each, and of the possibility of learning to relinquish such tendencies. Understandably, this stands to significantly dissolve the capacity of such imperatives to covertly inform practitioners' subjectivity around the habits of augmented rejection, negation and attachment. That is, outside of the meditation domain, and in relation to such growing awareness, it is conceivable that such practitioners will, at least partially, be able to begin refraining both from their erstwhile unwitting quiet acquiescence to such imperatives, which are reflected in the social fabric, and from their previous inadvertent tendency to actively

[63] Ibid., 188.

compound such imperatives via the propagation of discourses in which they are implicit. Secondly, such practitioners could then undertake to propagate the 'rules of dialogue,' rather than any 'traditional' Buddhist philosophy, because of the way in which, while the former would lay the groundwork for any process of problematization, the latter would amount to an exercise in polemics that would stand to subvert such a process. Foucault, in "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations," neatly sums up the difference between the two approaches; on the one hand, in terms of dialogue, when one asks questions, one reserves the right to stay doubtful and to thematize tensions and contradictions whenever they appear in the information one receives by way of response. Conversely, when one answers questions, one can neither distance oneself from what one has previously said, nor ignore the questions asked of one, even when they threaten to destabilize the logic of one's statements. When these rules are adhered to, then it becomes possible, through this discursive game, to collaborate with others in the endless pursuit of truth, which involves a journey that is guaranteed to alter, in the most unpredictable of ways, the positions of all who undertake it. On the other hand, in terms of polemics, one does not collaborate with others in this way, but rather defends what one construes as the truth (which one, moreover, believes oneself to already possess) against their questions, in a manner that vehemently resists any transformation over time of one's own position in relation to the confrontation.[64] Thirdly, on the basis of the propagation of the above 'rules of dialogue,' the problematization of the production of 'truth' through disciplinary/bio-power, in a manner that de-stabilizes the disciplinary/bio-power monologue, could be undertaken via the practice of discursive transgression. This necessarily entails a process of problematization, rather than a simple exercise in polemics, because it is based on the critical avenue, discussed earlier, which comprises of an ongoing process of research, contemplation and discussion, instead of any blind expounding of 'traditional' Buddhist dogma *ad infinitum*. In other words, such problematization entails engaging others in critical dialogue, rather than subjecting them to an uncritical monologue; it entails posing questions about the monologue communicated through the various disciplinary/bio-power technologies and their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions, rather than merely counter-

[64] Foucault, "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations," 111–112.

ing such a monologue with a different 'traditional' Buddhist monologue. Indeed, it entails a circumspect approach to the very habit of thinking in terms of 'transcendence,' in a manner that by default results in an approximation of immanent reflexivity, rather than any general valorization of a private state of 'being in the moment' as an end-in-itself. In this way, what the practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism would concern themselves with, outside of the meditation domain, are acts of discursive transgression that seek to carefully engage with and problematize existing discursive frameworks from which the enquiring work of thought has long since been absent. That is, unlike spectacular Dadaist gestures, such discursive acts of transgression would conceivably take the form of intimate conversations, which are interesting precisely because they constitute the site of dialogue, where the work of thought is allowed once again to be present. In this regard, it should be remembered that, as Foucault points out, the particular work of thought does not involve the blind, habitual repetition of certain forms of behavior, but is rather indissociable from an act of freedom, insofar as it occurs when one distances oneself from such behavior, albeit only momentarily, in order to reflect upon its legitimacy.[65] Understandably, the efficacy of such problematization rests on the thoroughness and success with which the three preceding phases of the proposed four-fold strategy are accomplished. This is because, firstly, without an acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, and without the establishment of a tentative political division between the meditation domain and the disciplinary/bio-power domain, there can be no sufficient *general* recognition of the monologue emanating from the latter as something that can be engaged with dialogically. Secondly, without the adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice, in the interest of identifying disciplinary/bio-power discourses within the context of the meditation domain, there can be no growth in understanding of the *specific* statements of the disciplinary/bio-power monologue that can be problematized through dialogue. Thirdly, without the use of Buddhist meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity in association with such discourse analysis, and without the concomitant de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity through such meditative practice, there can be no sufficient transformation of

[65] Ibid., 117.

subjectivity. Finally, without such transformation of subjectivity to endorse or 'back up' any discursive acts of transgression performed under the auspices of the fourth phase of the proposed four-fold strategy, such acts run the risk of amounting to little more than token gestures, easily disregarded as the product of intellectual dilettantism. Arguably, failure in this regard is neatly illustrated in the respective works of Lobsang Rampa, John Blofeld and Anagarika Govinda, discussed in the previous section. In fact, this is especially the case in the work of Govinda, where even his successful *explicit* discursive acts of transgression against disciplinary/bio-power discourses were *implicitly* subverted and rendered mere tokens of transgression, through the impetus of the disciplinary/bio-power discourses which continued to inform his subjectivity. In contrast, if, through the three preceding phases of the proposed four-fold strategy, subjectivity could be sufficiently transformed, then *explicit* acts of discursive transgression could potentially be endorsed or 'backed up' *implicitly* at the level of the everyday life practices of the individual in question. In relation to this, although the powerful discursive momentum behind the disciplinary/bio-power monologue should not be misjudged, similarly, the cogency that such *implicit* everyday life practices lend to such *explicit* acts of discursive transgression should also not be underestimated. After all, disciplinary/bio-power society is not presided over and directed by any one despotic force, but is only held together, and only flows in a particular direction, through the myopic force of uncritical discursive habit. It is in relation to such discursive habit that practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism would assume the task of addressing what Foucault, in "Truth and Power," advances as the most fundamental political problem of the contemporary era, namely the institutionalization of the production of truth. Accordingly, what this requires are efforts to divorce the power of truth production from the social, cultural and economic regimes that currently wield it, rather than any attempts to convert people to additional alternative truth claims in a manner that leaves the *principle* of such institutionalized truth production firmly intact.[66]

On the one hand, despite its Foucaultian orientation, the above dialogical endeavor to detach the 'power of truth' from social, cultural and economic regimes stands to resonate with certain aspects of the

[66] Foucault, "Truth and Power," 132–133.

agendas of some socialist organizations, most notably, aspects of the environmentalist agenda of the social greens, as advocated by figures such as Wolfgang Sachs, whose *Planet Dialectics* was referred to in the introduction of the current work. As such, in the interest of facilitating an articulation of these different struggles, it would conceivably be apposite at this point to explore such a resonance in relation to the social greens' call to limit production, reduce consumption, and localize economies.[67]

Firstly, practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, insofar as they problematize the validity of the notion of evolutive historicity, stand to concomitantly problematize the social hegemony which derives its coherence from this notion. Through doing so, they could conceivably contribute toward a limiting of production. This is because ever increasing levels of production are manifestations of a belief in the validity of evolutive historicity, insofar as, while they constitute the means by which evolutive historicity is actively pursued, the notion of evolutive historicity, in turn, sanctions the excesses of waste and pollution that accompany them. Moreover, the more discursive momentum evolutive historicity gathers, the more it ceases to be something that is willingly pursued, and the more it becomes something that demands endless pursuit, in the form of an infinite expenditure of finite resources. Understandably, because of the duress that this involves, the use of the disciplinary technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier and panopticism become imperative in order to guarantee a continual increase in levels of production. Admittedly, practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism would seek to problematize the discursive momentum behind both these various disciplinary technologies and the notion of evolutive historicity which underpins them, for very specific reasons. That is, such technologies and such a notion constitute a problem for the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism insofar as they, concomitantly, contribute to the constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict, and engender in subjects augmented habits of rejection, which, as discussed, are completely inimical to meditation in a way that prevents the de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity. Nevertheless, because the effect of the successful problematization of the discursive

[67] Sachs, *Planet Dialectics*, 86–89, 175–186, 197–212.

momentum behind both the various disciplinary technologies, and the notion of evolutive historicity which underpins them, would contribute to a diminution of levels of production, it would resonate significantly with the social greens' call to limit production.

Secondly, practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, insofar as they problematize the dominant notion of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth, stand to concomitantly problematize the cultural hegemony which derives its coherence from this notion. Through doing so, they could conceivably contribute toward a reduction of consumption. This is because ever increasing levels of consumption are in many ways driven by this notion, which constitutes the most efficacious means of marketing products by rendering them desirable. That is, on the one hand, certain products are arbitrarily associated with bodies, in a manner that implicitly advances the attainment of the product in question as being synonymous with the attainment of the truth ostensibly harbored in the bodies associated with it. On the other hand, other products are advanced as capable of augmenting the beauty of the individual body, either through its transformation or through its decoration, in a manner that carries the implication of a concomitant augmentation of the truth ostensibly harbored within the body in question. Yet, while the wheel of increasing consumption spins ever faster on the three spokes of the above mentioned arbitrarily associated products, transformative products and decorative products, these three spokes rely entirely for their efficacy on the hub of the dominant notion of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth. As such, if this dominant notion were to be problematized, it would not only undermine the technology of the deployment of sexuality. In addition, it would also contribute to a substantial derailing of many major marketing strategies upon which much of the edifice of consumerism currently rests, and the concomitant relegation of the products concerned to the realm of redundancy. Again, practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism would seek to problematize the discursive momentum behind this dominant notion of the body and the technology of the deployment of sexuality, for very specific reasons. That is, such a technology and such a notion constitute a problem for the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, insofar as they, concomitantly, contribute to the constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict, and engender in

subjects augmented habits of negation, which, as discussed, are completely inimical to meditation in a way that prevents the de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity. Nevertheless, because the effect of the successful problematization of the discursive momentum behind such a technology and such a notion would contribute to a diminution of levels of consumption, it would resonate significantly with the social greens' call to reduce consumption.

Thirdly, practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism could conceivably contribute toward a localization of economies, insofar as they problematize the dominant notion of the *legitimacy* of deferring to the authority of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth—a deference that, on account of the supposed mystery and potency involved, is advanced as requiring the mediation of the technology of secularized/medicalized confession, which, in turn, effectively robs individuals of their capacity for autonomy. This is because the economic hegemony exercised in the contemporary era derives its coherence from a *similar* dominant notion, namely a belief in the *legitimacy* of constantly deferring to the authority of the unstable, yet more powerful realm of the global economy—a deference that, on account of the instability and power involved, is advanced as requiring the mediation of institutions such as the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which, in turn, effectively robs local communities of their capacity for autonomy. Arguably, despite the indirect nature of this approach, because communities comprise of individuals, the failure of the latter to assert their autonomy *as* individuals, undermines the possibility of the communities of which they form part ever being able to assert their autonomy *as* communities. That is, because, as Foucault indicates in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, the most primary domain of political resistance is one's relationship with oneself,[68] the problem of the economically disenfranchised community must be addressed at the level of the individual, in relation to the more intimate dominant notion that robs him/her of autonomy. Again, practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism would seek to problematize the discursive momentum behind this dominant notion, and its associated technology of secularized/medicalized confession, for very specific reasons. That is, such technology and such a notion constitute a problem for the new socially engaged contemporary Western

[68] Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 252.

Buddhism, insofar as they, concomitantly, contribute to the constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict, and engender in subjects augmented habits of attachment, which, as discussed, are completely inimical to meditation in a way that prevents the de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity. Nevertheless, the successful problematization of the discursive momentum behind such technology and such a notion, would lend itself quite readily to a *similar* problematization of the dominant notion of the *legitimacy* of constantly deferring to the authority of both the unstable, yet more powerful realm of the global economy and the institutions associated with it. Through doing so, it would resonate indirectly but still significantly with the social greens' call to restore community autonomy through the localization of economies.

However, on the other hand, because the above dialogical endeavor on the part of the practitioners of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, neither advances that any particular despotic force manipulates any given population through illegitimate institutions, nor asserts that the consequent solution to this problem rests with mass movements, the deposing of such forces, and the formation of new legitimate institutions, a partial dissonance exists between it and certain aspects of other social strategies, such as those which derive from the anarcho-syndicalist tradition. In this regard, the work of David Loy serves as a good example, both because it is, to a significant extent, anarcho-syndicalist in orientation, and because it involves a blending of such an orientation with Buddhist theory and perspectives in the interest of engendering 'revolution.' As such, and because, in the interest of efficacy, any articulation of struggles must necessarily avoid an unwitting reduction of one to the other, it would perhaps be apposite at this point to explore such dissonance in relation to the work of David Loy.

In contrast to his earlier works, such as *Nonduality: A Study in Comparative Philosophy* and *Lack and Transcendence: The Problem of Death and Life in Psychotherapy, Existentialism and Buddhism*, which are, respectively, epistemological and ontological rather than political in orientation, Loy's more recent works, namely *A Buddhist History of the West: Studies in Lack*, *The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory*, and *Money, Sex, War, Karma: Notes for a Buddhist Revolution*, grapple with what he construes to be the socio-cultural and politico-economic crises of the contemporary era. However, as is clear from *Money, Sex, War, Karma*, Loy's social theory, like the social theory of

Noam Chomsky, is orientated around a distinctly anarcho-syndicalist perspective.[69] That is, not only does the propaganda model that Loy advances share a deep resonance with the propaganda model elaborated upon in Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*; in addition, Loy also refers specifically both to Chomsky and to the latter text in the interest of augmenting his own thematization of the growing coercive use of propaganda by contemporary democratic governments and multinational corporations.[70]

In short, according to Herman and Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent*, unlike totalitarian propaganda systems, the propaganda system of the United States media does not involve ruthless censorship and suppression, but rather engenders limited discussion of controversy within certain normative parameters. In this way, while the illusion of democratic debate is created, in reality, the cornerstones of the ideological status quo that are orientated around the interests of the elite remain non-negotiable. This, in turn, enables them to inform subjectivity across the entire socio-economic spectrum over time.[71] Accordingly, journalistic freedom of speech under the auspices of the media is proportional to the degree to which the subjectivity of the journalist in question has been informed in the above way. In contrast, those who resist the above ideological status quo too explicitly are, via a series of filters, increasingly denied a platform from which to communicate their views, which ultimately erodes the possibility of a successful career.[72] Through all of this, widespread consensus regarding the validity and legitimacy of the implicit tenets of the above ideological status quo is, quite literally, *manufactured*, at the level of both the greater population and the small number of journalists who translate the events of the contemporary era into a manageable format for them. Indeed, while such manufacturing of consent appears to be all the more effective

---

[69] Although, over the years, Noam Chomsky has been categorized under various political labels, in *Imperial Ambitions: Conversations with Noam Chomsky on the Post-9/11 World*, he makes it quite clear that of all these labels, anarcho-syndicalism is the one he feels most comfortable being associated with. Noam Chomsky and David Barsamian, *Imperial Ambitions: Conversations with Noam Chomsky on the Post-9/11 World* (London: Penguin, 2005), 177.

[70] David R. Loy, *Money, Sex, War, Karma: Notes for a Buddhist Revolution* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008), 93, 100.

[71] Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, 2d ed. (New York: Pantheon, 2002), 302.

[72] Ibid., 304.

because it neither relies on nor involves any blatant acts of intimidation that can be clearly identified and contested, its efficacy continues to grow exponentially in accordance with the increasing transnational corporate amalgamation of the mass media.[73]

In keeping with Herman and Chomsky's above assertions, Loy, in *Money, Sex, War, Karma*, not only decries the manner in which greed, ill will and delusion have become institutionalized, respectively, through the economic system, militarism and the mass media corporations of the United States, but also attributes the major crises of the contemporary era to such institutionalization.[74] Consequently, he concludes his work by calling for a mass revolution that is orientated around reining in large corporations—whose excesses have facilitated such institutionalization—through subjecting their charters to a public review process, and through instantiating such a review process as a periodical feature of the business landscape, so that corporate agendas can never again become utterly divorced from or antagonistic to public interest.[75] Thus, in short, Loy throws his intellectual weight behind an institutional approach to solving what he understands to be primarily institutional problems. Although *The Great Awakening* is somewhat less explicitly Chomskyan in orientation, in this work Loy nevertheless also argues for a collective and an institutional approach to the above problems,[76] and even goes so far as to advance that the five precepts of Buddhism be rearticulated as social precepts for use as criteria in the moral assessment of institutions.[77] Similarly, in *A Buddhist History of the West*, the entire fourth chapter, entitled "The Lack of Modernity," is devoted to drawing into conspicuousness the historical antecedents of the illegitimate and coercive socio-cultural and politico-economic institutions which subordinate contemporary individuals.[78]

Of course, the above is by no means a criticism of Loy's approach; on the contrary, his texts remain of immense value to the contemporary era in virtue of the interesting and creative interface that they provide between Buddhist philosophy and current socio-cultural and politico-

---

[73] Ibid., xiii, 306.
[74] Loy, *Money, Sex, War, Karma*, 89–94.
[75] Ibid., 151.
[76] David R. Loy, *The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2003), 29.
[77] Ibid., 37–38.
[78] David R. Loy, *A Buddhist History of the West: Studies in Lack* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), 87–124.

economic developments. However, on account of their institutional orientation, they do differ from the proposed four-fold strategy for the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism advanced in the current work. In short, Loy maintains, firstly, that individuals in the contemporary era are subject to orchestrated manipulation via forms of propaganda, secondly, that what is required is a mass revolution within the parameters of democracy in the interest of, thirdly, reforming the problematic institutions that are currently behind the manipulation. However, in contrast, from the perspective of the proposed four-fold strategy for the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, firstly, individuals in the contemporary era are not subject to any powerful, *orchestrated* manipulation via propaganda; rather, as Foucault points out in "Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault," they exist in a state of freedom of which they are not aware. To be sure, for the most part, individuals remain collectively beholden to certain ideas which they take to be completely true and therefore non-negotiable; however, these are only notions which, after congealing at particular historical junctures, have subsequently been uncritically accepted, with the consequence that they are immensely vulnerable to becoming de-stabilized through critical reflection.[79] Thus, whatever is communicated via the mass media is possessed of an Achilles' heel, so to speak, insofar as, while it may involve a partisan inflection of certain notions, these notions are themselves always predicated on certain historical assumptions which can quite easily be engaged with critically and debunked. Secondly, a mass revolution, even within the parameters of democracy, is not necessarily desirable, because, as Foucault argues, there is never any guarantee that it will be able to avoid ending up as an exercise in oppression itself. Indeed, despite the benevolence, magnanimity and altruistic sentiment which precipitate them, revolutionary programs have an uncanny tendency to become transformed into mirror images of the apparatuses of oppression against which they were initially directed.[80] Thirdly, and related to the above point, Foucault goes on to explain in "Truth and Power" that the idea of any reform movement, especially one that follows in the wake of revolution, is always highly problematic. This is because the functioning of any given state rests on the codification of

[79] Foucault, "Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault," 10–11.
[80] Ibid., 10.

an array of implicit power relations, with the consequence that, unless any given reform movement does more than merely re-codify these power relations after revolution—that is, unless it engages in a critical consideration of the dynamics of these power relations—it is entirely possible that such relations will remain constant despite the upheaval of insurrection and the ostensible processes of remedial restructuring that succeed it.[81] As such, instead of regarding the partisan inflection of certain notions by the mass media as a powerful form of propaganda, and instead of trying to engender mass movements, in the interest of pursuing revolution and subsequent institutional reform, the task of the new socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism is the incessant problematization of *all* institutional power and of *all* of the ways in which such power produces 'truth.' In this regard, it is perhaps helpful to remember that, as Foucault advances in "Practicing Criticism," critique does not involve any simplistic evaluation of an institution, in terms of which it is declared to be wanting in some or other way; rather, it involves the thematization and reconsideration of the unchallenged assumptions upon which the perceived legitimacy of the institution rests. The importance of such critique, in turn, derives from its capacity to usher in transformation, less as a product of design, and more as the spontaneous consequence of being unable to view the institution in question in the same way as before—such that one cannot *but* engage in the creative formulation of new possibilities of response to what was previously accepted as a given.[82] In short, what is being called for in the current work is a perpetual and pervasive discursive antagonism, in the form of critique, which functions widely and randomly across the discursive terrain, in accordance with guerilla tactics, so to speak, in the interest of repeatedly causing the closing hand of any restrictive discursive economy to open before it can form a fist.

---

[81] Foucault, "Truth and Power," 123.
[82] Foucault, "Practicing Criticism," 154–155.

Table 5 The proposed four-fold strategy for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism

Phase	Objective	Process	Requisite
First phase	An acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity	The establishment of a tentative political division between the meditation domain and the disciplinary/bio-power domain	Problematizing the prevailing suspicion surrounding the validity of linking religion and politics. A consequent re-politicization of Buddhist practice
Second phase	The adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice	The identification of the discourses of the disciplinary/bio-power domain within the context of the meditation domain	Communal involvement in order to facilitate the development of an increasingly widespread and multilayered critical capacity among growing numbers of Buddhist practitioners
Third phase	The use of meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity in association with such discourse analysis	The de-formation of disciplinary/bio-power subjectivity through meditative practice *within* the meditation domain	A re-evaluation of meditation: meditation as orientated around the increasing approximation of immanent reflexivity in relation to disciplinary/bio-power imperatives, which otherwise characterize one's experience of subjectivity as transcendent in orientation

Table 5 (*cont.*)

Phase	Objective	Process	Requisite
Fourth phase	A commitment to problematize the production of 'truth' through disciplinary/ bio-power	The de-stabilization of the disciplinary/ bio-power monologue through the practice of discursive transgression *outside* of the meditation domain	A re-evaluation of Buddhism: Buddhism as orientated less around the pursuit of personal liberation through quiet, private meditation, and more around the pursuit of social transformation through vocal, public involvement—that is, through acts of critical engagement, problematization and discursive transgression

Table 6 Resonance between the orientation of the new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, and the social greens' call to limit production, reduce consumption, and localize economies

Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Related disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Environmental impact of this founding assumption and this disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Consequence of practitioners' problematization of this founding assumption and this disciplinary/ bio-power technology
Evolutive historicity	Spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier, and panopticism	Ever increasing levels of production are manifestations of a belief in the validity of evolutive historicity. The disciplinary technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier and panopticism are implemented in	A limiting of production, through the de-stabilization of the existing social hegemony that is predicated on a belief in the validity of evolutive historicity

Table 6 (*cont.*)

Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Related disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Environmental impact of this founding assumption and this disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Consequence of practitioners' problematization of this founding assumption and this disciplinary/ bio-power technology
		order to guarantee a continual increase in levels of production	
The idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth	The deployment of sexuality	Ever increasing levels of consumption are driven by the association of certain products with bodies, in a manner that implicitly advances the attainment of the product in question as being synonymous with the attainment of the truth ostensibly harbored in the bodies associated with it. Similarly, other products promise to augment the truth ostensibly harbored in the individual body by augmenting its beauty, either through its transformation or through its decoration	A reduction of consumption, through the de-stabilization of the existing cultural hegemony that is predicated on the idea of the body as infused with an enigmatic sexual power that makes it, simultaneously, a repository of truth
The idea of the existence of an elusive, more primary realm of psychic truth, to which one always ultimately has to defer authority	Secularized/medicalized confession	Ever increasing levels of economic dominance are sanctioned through this founding assumption and this technology, which rob individuals of their capacity for autonomy. The reason for this is that, because communities comprise of	A localization of economies, through the de-stabilization of the existing economic hegemony. This occurs indirectly through the de-stabilization of the transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption of secularized/medicalized confession. In short,

Table 6 (*cont.*)

Transcendent orientated implicit founding assumption	Related disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Environmental impact of this founding assumption and this disciplinary/ bio-power technology	Consequence of practitioners' problematization of this founding assumption and this disciplinary/ bio-power technology
		individuals, the failure of the latter to assert their autonomy *as* individuals undermines the possibility of the communities, of which they form part, ever being able to assert their economic autonomy *as* communities	as individuals learn to assert their autonomy *as* individuals, the communities of which they form part become capable of asserting their economic autonomy *as* communities

CONCLUSION

Throughout *Buddhism and Science*, Donald Lopez poses a number of very interesting, but often quite disturbing, questions to contemporary Buddhists around the world, one of the more troubling of which, as discussed in the introduction, concerns the possibility of the continued existence, as a living tradition, of a demythologized Buddhism in which Mount Meru plays no part.[1] At first glance, it appears to be a rather simplistic question, easily dispatched through both a negation of the continued validity of archaic Buddhist cosmology in an age of modern science, and a concomitant emphasis on the psychological and physical benefits of practicing Buddhist meditation—as though such benefits have always secretly constituted the underlying reason for involvement with this religio-philosophic practice. Unfortunately though, upon closer inspection, this rather glib reply, instead of providing a reasonable and solid foundation upon which to base the Buddhism of the present, emerges as increasingly problematic and unstable. In short, this is not only because, as Lopez suggests, in negating the Buddha's omniscience, the above rationalization opens up the possibility for the subsequent arbitrary and piecemeal erosion of his teachings, both in accordance with one's personal predilections and on the basis of the principle that his error regarding the cosmos betrays the possibility that he may have been mistaken about other things too.[2] In addition, it is also because such rationalization stands to rob Buddhism of its lifeblood, so to speak, insofar as, without a cosmos in which its practices constitute a redemptive response to an original 'fall,' and hence the most important of all human activities,[3] such practices lose their nobility and urgency through becoming little more than self-orientated therapeutic measures, undertaken on those occasions when stress makes life a little too uncomfortable. Conceivably, in response to the prospect of both losing such grandeur and being mired in such pedestrianism, some contemporary Buddhists (who have long been haunted rather than liberated by the post-modern cultural flux) may well see in the above an opportunity

[1] Lopez, *Buddhism and Science*, 72.
[2] Ibid., 64.
[3] See note 16, Introduction.

for an 'existential' leap of faith—that is, a blind, uncritical and fundamentalist embrace of a belief in both the Buddha's omniscience and Buddhist cosmology, and a concomitant rejection of all that is modern and scientific. However, what the preceding pages of this book have tried to show is that, for the most part, any such leap of faith would be obliged to remain a leap indefinitely deferred. Quite simply, this is because, no matter how earnestly it may be desired, one can neither wish away the discourses of disciplinary/bio-power, nor ignore their role in the formation of subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict. Indeed, not only do disciplinary/bio-power discourses inform subjectivity all the more powerfully whenever they are met by willful myopia that does not wish to acknowledge their existence; in addition, they also have the associated potential to reduce to the level of the ornament any form of Buddhism that does not take cognizance of their influence and restructure its meditative practices accordingly.

Of course, the critic may well wish to point out, firstly, that in its formal academic style, the writing of all of the previous pages argues for transgression against disciplinary/bio-power in a *most* spatio-temporally disciplined manner, secondly, that it peers panoptically into the lives of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda while arguing for the insidiousness of such a technology, thirdly, that it places immense value on their respective autobiographical 'confessions' while arguing for the redundancy of secularized/medicalized confession, and fourthly, that it devalues the ostensible sagacity of the psychiatrist while surreptitiously elevating Foucault to the normative level of the sage. If this were indeed the case, the current work would obviously invite the exclamation, "Aha, *tu quoque* disciplinary subject! Stylistically *and* in terms of approach, captive of the same sort of thing so ruthlessly uncovered in other cases!" However, this is not the case, and to regard the current work in such a light would be considerably myopic. This is not least because it would involve a willful ignoring of the way in which the proposed four-fold strategy for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, advanced in the previous chapter, gravitates around an approximation of the empty center of *śūnyatā*, rather than around any endorsement of the respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions of the different disciplinary/bio-power technologies. In this regard, and in response to the above hypothetical criticism, firstly, the use of a formal academic style in the current work should instead be understood as part of the guerilla tactics, advanced in the previous chapter, as a key feature of the discursive antagonism of the proposed

new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism. That is, through its use of logic and analysis it critiques the legitimacy of disciplinary/bio-power discourses in a structured manner that is familiar to contemporary subjects, on account of the way in which their subjectivity has been informed by such discourses. However, the result of the ensuing problematization is not the endorsement of any restrictive disciplinary/bio-power discursive economy, but rather an ever greater approximation of the spaciousness of *śūnyatā*, the more the legitimacy of disciplinary/bio-power discourses is undermined. Secondly, it would be unwarranted to regard the various analyses of Chapters Five, Six and Seven as informed by the panoptical *gaze*, because the lives of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda are not gazed down upon from any central panoptical position, with a view to transforming their respective behavior in accordance with the specific dictates of some disciplinary/bio-power design. Rather, their lives are regarded as mirrors within which important aspects of the reader's, and for that matter, the author's, subjectivity are reflected; mirrors that are valuable because, in the wake of both the recognition of such aspects and the subsequent unpacking of the disciplinary/bio-power discourses that conditioned their development, a hitherto unimagined multiplicity of new subjectivities can emerge and dissolve irregularly against the backdrop of the spaciousness of *śūnyatā*. Thirdly, although the autobiographical 'confessions' of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda are focused upon in the above mentioned chapters, they are explicitly not valued as literary manifestations of some latent discontent, or, in other words, as aesthetic products that can be analyzed to reveal the deep, enigmatic, *unconscious* issues that underpin them, and of which they are ultimately only expressions. Instead, the entire notion of depth associated with secularized/medicalized confession is dissolved in the interest of a 'flattening out' of subjectivity, so to speak, in terms of which individuals are allowed to be both superficial and empty—superficial, in the sense that, while they are discursively constituted, they have only to reposition themselves in relation to discourse in order to change; and empty, in the sense that, on account of the spaciousness of *śūnyatā*, they are much less solid and integral than secularized/medicalized confession has hitherto led them to believe, and much more porous and protean than they have previously imagined themselves to be. Fourthly, while the current work takes as its point of departure the validity of both Foucault's archaeological/genealogical analyses and his later work on subjectivity, and thus presents them as normative in its argument, it

should be recalled that this *always* remains part of a greater general endeavor to couch the appropriation of Buddhism in the contemporary West within critical theoretical perspectives that take into account developments within the context of Western society, and that identify possible discursive problems, in relation to such developments, which can be engaged with. Although it would obviously be counterproductive to actually instantiate any one of these articulations of Buddhism *as* normative, arguably, in the interest of providing real alternatives, those who engage in such articulation must necessarily advance their respective positions as normative, at least initially, in anticipation of engaging in subsequent edifying dialogue with others. As such, despite the particular Foucaultian inflection of the current work, it should be remembered that the point of the endeavor is to facilitate the emergence of a multiplicity of articulations of Buddhism, in the interest of concomitantly problematizing the institutionalization of power and allowing for the growth of non-ornamental Buddhism.

Notably, a distinct resonance exists between this endeavor and the two-fold goal advanced by Bernard Faure in his *Double Exposure: Cutting Across Buddhist and Western Discourses*. In short, this goal involves, on the one hand, the pursuit of a de-familiarization of Western thought, in the interest of generating a critical appraisal of certain of its dynamics, which have otherwise been taken for granted in a way that has led to the emergence of certain apparent conceptual impasses. On the other hand, this goal involves the pursuit of a de-mystification of Buddhist thought, in the interest of freeing it from some of the debilitating associations which have otherwise encumbered it and led to its reification as an apolitical relic.[4] In this regard, for example, Faure not only problematizes the arrogant eschewal of religion by Western philosophy through pointing out, among other things, how the principle of monotheism continues to underpin the reification of rationality in Western philosophy.[5] In addition, he also problematizes the mystique of authenticity that has come to surround Buddhism, by making it patently clear that to imbue Buddhism with the enigmatic aura of something that houses within its recesses a deep and *unchanging* truth is completely unwarranted.[6] However, although Faure's approach

[4] Bernard Faure, *Double Exposure: Cutting Across Buddhist and Western Discourses*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 6.
[5] Ibid., 78.
[6] Ibid., 90–91.

is thus highly iconoclastic, he qualifies his work as developmental rather than destructive in orientation, insofar as he seeks thereby to facilitate a mutually beneficial interface between Western philosophy and Buddhist philosophy.[7]

That said, though, there also exist significant differences between the current work and Faure's work, which derive primarily from the way in which the de-familiarization of Western thought and the de-mystification of Buddhist thought that occur in the current work are, in a specific sense, utterly indissociable. That is, through a process of de-familiarizing disciplinary/bio-power, what emerges into conspicuousness is that its constitution of contemporary subjectivity as a locus of perpetual discursive conflict is *the* problem to which Western interest in Buddhism constitutes a response. Conversely, through a process of de-mystifying contemporary Western Buddhism, what becomes clear is its inseparability from the five main disciplinary/bio-power technologies of spatio-temporal regimentation, the dossier, panopticism, the deployment of sexuality, and secularized/medicalized confession, along with their respective transcendent orientated implicit founding assumptions. Similarly, while the proposed four-fold strategy for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism aims to de-familiarize disciplinary/bio-power—in the interest of overcoming the way in which its technologies and assumptions inform subjectivity—its success in this regard is conditional upon a de-mystification of Buddhism involving the re-articulation of Buddhism, both in political terms and in a way that acknowledges the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity.

Consequently, the current work also differs quite markedly from Faure's work in its impatience to effect social transformation. That is, Faure's work entails a broad and unhurried philosophical consideration of the history of Buddhist discourses, through what often amounts to a Foucaultian lens, in the interest of gradually eliciting, from contemporary Western academia, responses both to the questions it explicitly poses and to its unspoken implications. In contrast, the current work entails a more narrowly defined and urgent political consideration of the history of disciplinary/bio-power discourses, in a manner that is explicitly orientated around Foucault's archaeological/genealogical analyses and his later work on subjectivity; moreover, it is undertaken

[7] Ibid., xi, xiii.

in the interest of rapidly facilitating the transformation of both the way in which Buddhism is appropriated in the contemporary West, and, through this, the dynamics of the discursive terrain of the contemporary West itself.

In this regard, and in relation to the issue of discursive transgression, the differences between the current work and Faure's work emerge most strongly. That is, for example, in *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*, Faure examines, among other things, the way in which, in the history of Chan, transgressive statements that denied gender differences were primarily rhetorical in nature, insofar as they were never articulated in a manner capable of subverting the status quo.[8] Following on from this, while, on the one hand, in *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*, Faure examines certain historical practices within Chan that sought to defuse transgression through ritualizing it,[9] on the other hand, in *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity and Gender*, he elaborates specifically upon certain forms of discursive containment of transgression within the Buddhist folklore of Japan.[10] In contrast, the current work not only considers forms of discursive transgression against disciplinary/bio-power imperatives, instead of against Buddhist imperatives; in addition, it also does so not in relation to the historical literature of 'traditional' Buddhism, but rather in relation to the literary works of contemporary Western Buddhism—in the interest of augmenting the efficacy of discursive transgression against disciplinary/bio-power imperatives in the future.

Yet, despite the above differences, because the hitherto political impotence of contemporary Western Buddhism can be attributed largely to its orientation around Orientalism and nostalgia, and because Faure's works constitute a powerful tool for the dissolution of such an orientation, they arguably remain of immense value to the project outlined in the current work, their focus on the historical literature of 'traditional' Buddhism notwithstanding. Indeed, it is quite conceivable that they may even serve as an important bridge between the proposed new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism and 'traditional'

---

[8] Bernard Faure, *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 242.

[9] Bernard Faure, *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 98–143.

[10] Bernard Faure, *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 219–249.

Buddhism, insofar as, on account of their focus, Faure's works could help activate the critical political edge of the latter by shaking it out of its complacency.

Arguably, such communication and collaboration between the proposed new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism and 'traditional' Buddhism is very important. This is because, as discussed in the introduction, on account of the current ubiquity of disciplinary/bio-power, the specter of ornamentalism that has hitherto haunted contemporary Western Buddhism now plagues 'traditional' Buddhism to more or less the same degree. However, in an effort to address this issue, while the proposed new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism concomitantly de-familiarizes disciplinary/bio-power and de-mystifies Buddhism, arguably, an *inverse* process will be required within the context of 'traditional' Buddhism, namely, a de-mystification of disciplinary/bio-power and a de-familiarization of Buddhism. That is, on the one hand, for a long time now, and as a consequence of its situation within southern rather than northern countries,[11] 'traditional' Buddhism has found itself both surrounded by, and increasingly pervaded by, discourses that have tended to 'mystify' disciplinary/bio-power as the panacea for all social ills. As Wolfgang Sachs explains in *Planet Dialectics*, after 1945 southern countries increasingly began to accept the northern principle of development as a benchmark against which to measure their socio-cultural and politico-economic success, the effect of which was the progressive marginalization of their respective indigenous cultural achievements, to the point where such achievements became significantly dissolved and fragmented when they were not completely forgotten.[12] Under these circumstances, it would arguably be naïve to continue to regard 'traditional' Buddhism as more 'authentic' than contemporary Western Buddhism. As already discussed, although the practitioners of 'traditional' Buddhism may continue to profess an ardent devotion to Buddhism, from a discursive point of view, they are now, for the most part, primarily globally orientated Western subjects, and only Buddhist at a secondary level. Yet, on the other hand, because a 'familiarity' with Buddhist philosophy and practice within this domain has increasingly lent to 'traditional' Buddhism a conservative staidness rather than a liberal dynamism, its

[11] See note 12, Chapter Five.
[12] Sachs, *Planet Dialectics*, 5–6.

current ornamental orientation has remained largely unrecognized by its practitioners.

In relation to this, while the proposed four-fold strategy for a new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, discussed in the last chapter of the current work, constitutes a model that can be extended to 'traditional' Buddhism in the interest of assisting it with de-mystifying disciplinary/bio-power, Faure's work, for the reasons already mentioned, constitutes a valuable tool for the accompanying process of de-familiarizing Buddhism within the context of this conservatively staid domain. Indeed, if enough critical echelons within the various forms of 'traditional' Buddhism were to progressively adopt and develop such an approach, it is quite conceivable that at some point in the future, the edifice of 'traditional' Buddhism could not only begin to resist disciplinary/bio-power, but could also begin to play an active role in the transformation of the global discursive terrain. It would, after all, only require a slight shift in its internal rationale and a slight alteration in its discursive trajectory, before the full weight of the immense discursive impetus currently possessed by 'traditional' Buddhism could be directed against, and focused upon, those discursive dynamics that have recently rendered it ornamental.

Admittedly, though, this will not be a simple process. As Jeremy Carrette and Richard King point out in *Selling Spirituality*, the condition of the possibility of such an international coalition forming and, moreover, being able to effectively articulate opposition of this kind, would be the recognition of the above mentioned endangered cultural heritages.[13] Yet, while, on the one hand, without work such as that produced by Faure, the critical political edge of 'traditional' Buddhism could easily remain dormant, on the other hand, through such work, certain aspects of the above mentioned endangered cultural heritages stand to be debunked rather than recognized as worthy of veneration. Thankfully, though, in this regard, strong parallels do also exist between, on the one hand, 'traditional' Buddhist philosophy and practice, and, on the other hand, the process of discourse analysis, and the thematization of these parallels may yet prove to be of value in the negotiation of any international coalition. To begin with, while Buddhist meditation, orientated around approximating *śūnyatā*, dovetails faultlessly with the analytic endeavor of approximating the 'empty center' of all discursive formations, the meditative means to such an insight are also reflected

[13] Carrette and King, *Selling Spirituality*, 177–178.

in the practice of discourse analysis. That is, the development of meditative sensitivity to both the spontaneous movement of the mind and the arbitrary nature of its paths of association is mirrored, respectively, in the appreciation of the phenomenon of discursive irruption, and in the acceptance of the random rather than teleological trajectory of historico-discursive formations. The Buddhist idea of *karma*, too, has the potential to resonate deeply with the idea of 'discursive momentum,' insofar as, while positive karma could be understood in terms of the propagation of increasingly self-reflexive discourses that thematize their own 'empty center,' negative karma, conversely, could be understood in terms of the propagation of discourses that attempt to eclipse the possibility of arriving at such insight. Similarly, through such a thematization of parallels, even the Buddhist notion of *rebirth* stands to be relieved of its historically tenuous position, through being regarded as an allegory of the forms of subjectivity that will be constituted in the future, in relation to the discursive legacy that is left today. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the current work, patterned as it is upon the *original* Four Noble Truths of Buddhism,[14] has attempted to elucidate a possible manner of approaching the concept of discursive suffering as something mobile and protean. That is, while part 2 concerned the *phenomenon* of discursive suffering, which is evinced in the writings of Rampa, Blofeld and Govinda, part 1 concerned the *arising* of such discursive suffering, as the result of both the different technologies of disciplinary/bio-power, which simultaneously advance conflicting concepts of autonomy, and the concomitant incongruity between the divergent transcendent orientations of their respective implicit founding assumptions. In turn, part 3 concerned not only the possibility of the *cessation* of such discursive suffering, but also the nature of the *path* that would need to be traversed to facilitate such cessation. Of course, this does not constitute an attempt to negate the *original* Four Noble Truths; rather, it only suggests that in relation to the new and rapidly changing discursive dynamics of the contemporary era, and the increasingly complex forms of discursive suffering experienced in relation to them, it is perhaps time to include, alongside the *original* Four Noble Truths, such a discursively re-orientated variation on their approach to suffering. In short, this is because, as Foucault explains in "On the Genealogy of Ethics," it makes very little sense to respond to the historically contingent and culturally nuanced problems that plague one in the

[14] See note 7, Introduction.

present, by seeking their solution *solely* in someone else's solution to a very different problem which occurred, moreover, at a very different time in history and in a very different cultural context.[15]

In closing, it is not a question of whether or not Buddhism is relevant to the contemporary era; so long as there is the suffering of old age, sickness and death, Buddhism will *always* be relevant. However, what has to be acknowledged is that such suffering is always discursively mediated, and that new discourses can also create powerful, new forms of suffering—indeed, forms of suffering that can even lead to sickness and death, not only at the level of the individual, but also at the levels of both the community and the environment. The question, therefore, concerns only the *degree* of the relevance of Buddhism to the contemporary era. In the case of an ornamental Buddhism, orientated around Orientalism and nostalgia, the degree of this relevance is very limited, because such Buddhism constitutes a blind compensatory response to the discursive problems of the contemporary era, rather than a direct address of them. In the case of the proposed new type of socially engaged contemporary Western Buddhism, which eschews such Orientalism and nostalgia, and which takes as its point of departure discourse analysis, the degree of this relevance is greatly increased. Moreover, the latter stance also opens up the possibility of the continued maintenance of such relevance. This is because the acknowledgement of the role of discourse in the formation of subjectivity, the adoption of discourse analysis as a critical tool within Buddhist practice, and the use of meditation as a means of approximating immanent reflexivity in association with such discourse analysis, would imbue Buddhism with the mobility to engage with changing discursive formations and new configurations of power, both in the present and for the foreseeable future. Yet, understandably, in the interest of doing so, Buddhism will have to relinquish the relative comfort of its recent exclusive orientation around *personal liberation* through quiet, private meditation. Although such an orientation will necessarily remain an important feature of Buddhism, since without it there can be no significant transformation of subjectivity, it will have to be coupled in the future with the additional endeavor to effect *social transformation* through vocal, public involvement—that is, through acts of critical engagement, acts of problematization, and, ultimately, acts of discursive transgression.

---

[15] Foucault, "On the Genealogy of Ethics," 256.

AFTERWORD

What remains troubling are not only the existing questions posed by the current work, which it does not fully answer. In addition, the still amorphous concerns that lurk along its conceptual periphery, and which have yet to shed their nebulous state and assume the form of other questions, also constitute a deep source of worry. However, it would appear that this is an unavoidable, and indeed perennial, anxiety faced by those authors who propose changes to the things that they have long loved, who only do so in order for their devotion to continue, but who have no guarantee whatsoever that any change thus precipitated will resonate with their initial designs. Thankfully, though, and perhaps because Friedrich Nietzsche wrote it with far greater books than the current work in mind, aphorism 208 from his *Human, All-Too-Human* provides at least a measure of solace in this regard. In it, Nietzsche comments on the equally perennial astonishment that awaits authors—and for which they can never fully prepare themselves—when their carefully sculpted words finally leave the ambit of their control to begin life independently as a book. Accordingly, while the author in various ways grows distant from what he has written, conversely, the book in various ways draws close to others, and through the complex, protean and unpredictable relationships that ensue, produces effects akin to that of a person, as though it were possessed of its own mind and will.[16] It is my most sincere wish and my deepest hope that, in all of its future relationships, the current work will be a good person, that it will prove to be of assistance to all those it encounters, and that, at least in some small way, it will make a contribution to the growth of non-ornamental Buddhism in the future.

[16] Nietzsche, *Human, All-Too-Human*, 111.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abhidhammattha Sangaha: A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma. Edited by Bhikkhu Bodhi. Onalaska: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 2000.

Basham, A. L. "Hinduism." In *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Living Faiths*, edited by R. C. Zaehner. Oxford: Helicon, 1988.

Bishop, Peter. *Dreams of Power: Tibetan Buddhism and the Western Imagination*. London: The Athlone Press, 1993.

Blofeld, John. *Bodhisattva of Compassion: The Mystical Tradition of Kuan Yin*. Boston: Shambhala, 1988.

——. *The Tantric Mysticism of Tibet: A Practical Guide to the Theory, Purpose, and Techniques of Tantric Meditation*. New York: Arkana, 1992.

——. *The Wheel of Life: The Autobiography of a Western Buddhist*. London: Rider & Company, 1978.

Carrette, Jeremy, and Richard King. *Selling Spirituality: The Silent Takeover of Religion*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Castel, Robert. "The Doctors and Judges" (1973). In *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.

Chomsky, Noam, and David Barsamian. *Imperial Ambitions: Conversations with Noam Chomsky on the Post-9/11 World*. London: Penguin, 2005.

Clapp, Jennifer, and Peter Dauvergne. *Paths to a Green World: The Political Economy of the Global Environment*. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2005.

Denning, Michael. "Licensed to Look: James Bond and the Heroism of Consumption" (1987). In *Contemporary Marxist Literary Criticism*, edited by F. Mulhern. Singapore: Longman Group U.K. Ltd., 1992.

Dreyfus, Hubert L., and Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Faludi, Susan. *Stiffed: The Betrayal of Modern Man*. London: Vintage, 2000.

Faure, Bernard. *Double Exposure: Cutting Across Buddhist and Western Discourses*. Translated by Janet Lloyd. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

——. *The Power of Denial: Buddhism, Purity, and Gender*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003.

——. *The Red Thread: Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

——. *The Rhetoric of Immediacy: A Cultural Critique of Chan/Zen Buddhism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.

Fleming, Ian. *From Russia, With Love*. St. Albans: Triad Panther, 1977.

Fontana, Alexandre. "The Intermittences of Rationality" (1973). In *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.

Foucault, Michel. *Abnormal: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1974–1975*. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Picador, 2003.

——. "About the Concept of the Dangerous Individual" (1978). In *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2002.

——. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Allan Sheridan. London: Penguin, 1991.

——. *Fearless Speech*. Edited by Joseph Pearson. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2001.

——. Foreword to *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.
——. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. Translated by Richard Howard. New York: Mentor, 1967.
——. "On the Archaeology of the Sciences: Response to the Epistemology Circle" (1968). In *Aesthetics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. "On the Genealogy of Ethics" (1983). In *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. "Pastoral Power and Political Reason" (1979). In *Religion and Culture*, edited by Jeremy Carrette. New York: Routledge, 1999.
——. "Polemics, Politics, and Problematizations" (1984). In *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. "Power and Sex" (1977). In *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977–1984*, edited by Lawrence D. Kritzman. New York: Routledge, 1990.
——. "Practicing Criticism" (1981). In *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings 1977–1984*, edited by Lawrence D. Kritzman. New York: Routledge, 1990.
——. "Sex, Power, and the Politics of Identity" (1984). In *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. "Sexual Choice, Sexual Act" (1983). In *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1975–1976*. Translated by David Macey. New York: Picador, 2003.
——. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith. London: Routledge, 2002.
——. "The Birth of Social Medicine" (1974). In *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2002.
——. *The Birth of the Clinic*. Translated by A. M. Sheridan. London: Routledge, 2003.
——. "The Confession of the Flesh" (1977). In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980.
——. "The Discourse on Language" (1970). In Dreyfus, Hubert L., and Paul Rabinow. *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
——. "The Ethics of the Concern for the Self as a Practice of Freedom" (1984). In *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. "The Eye of Power" (1977). In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980.
——. *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France: 1981–1982*. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
——. "The History of Sexuality" (1977). In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980.
——. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Routledge, 2003.
——. "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century" (1976). In *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon, 1980.
——. "The Punitive Society" (1972). In *Ethics: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. London: Penguin, 2000.
——. "The Subject and Power" (1982). In *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2002.

——. *The Use of Pleasure: The History of Sexuality: Volume Two*. Translated by Robert Hurley. London: Penguin, 1992.
——. *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: Volume One*. Translated by Robert Hurley. London: Penguin, 1998.
——. "Truth and Juridical Forms" (1973). In *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2002.
——. "Truth and Power" (1977). In *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2002.
——. "Truth, Power, Self: An Interview with Michel Foucault" (1982). In *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*, edited by Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman and Patrick H. Hutton. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.
——. "What Is Called 'Punishing'?" (1984). In *Power: Essential Works of Foucault: 1954–1984*, edited by James D. Faubion. London: Penguin, 2002.
——. "Who are you, Professor Foucault?" (1967). In *Religion and Culture*, edited by Jeremy Carrette. New York: Routledge, 1999.
Govinda, Anagarika. *Creative Meditation and Multi-Dimensional Consciousness*. Wheaton: Quest Books, 1978.
——. *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*. London: Century, 1987.
——. *Insights of a Himalayan Pilgrim*. Oakland: Dharma Publishing, 1991.
——. *Psycho-Cosmic Symbolism of the Buddhist Stupa*. Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1976.
——. *The Way of the White Clouds*. Woodstock: The Overlook Press, 2005.
Gutting, Gary. Introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*. 2d ed., edited by Gary Gutting. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
Gyatso, Tenzin, and Jean-Claude Carrière. *The Power of Buddhism*. Dublin: Newleaf, 1996.
Herman, Edward S., and Noam Chomsky. *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. 2d ed. New York: Pantheon, 2002.
Hoffman, Michael E., et al. *Tibet: The Sacred Realm*. New York: Aperture, 1983.
King, Richard. *Orientalism and Religion: Postcolonial Theory, India and 'the Mystic East.'* London: Routledge, 2008.
Krüger, J. S. *Buddhism: From the Buddha to Asoka*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, 1995.
——. *Turning-points in Buddhist Mysticism and Philosophy*. Pretoria: Aurora Press, 2007.
Le Blanc, Lhomedé. "Body Receipt by the Head Warden of the Central Prison" (1840). In *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.
Liebmann Schaub, Uta. "Foucault's Oriental Subtext." *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 104/3 (1989): 306–316.
Lopez, Donald S. Jr. *Buddhism and Science: A Guide for the Perplexed*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.
——. *Prisoners of Shangri-La: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999.
Loy, David R. *A Buddhist History of the West: Studies in Lack*. New York: State University of New York Press, 2002.
——. *Money, Sex, War, Karma: Notes for a Buddhist Revolution*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2008.
——. *The Great Awakening: A Buddhist Social Theory*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2003.
McMahan, David L. *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
Miller, James. *The Passion of Michel Foucault*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Moulin, Patricia. "Extenuating Circumstances" (1973). In *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.

Nairn, Rob. *Diamond Mind: Psychology of Meditation*. Cape Town: Kairon Press, 1998.

——. *Tranquil Mind: An Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation*. Cape Town: Carrefour/Dragon Publications, 1994.

Nhat Hanh, Thich. *Be Free Where You Are*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2002.

——. *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy and Liberation*. London: Rider, 1998.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Human, All-Too-Human: Parts One and Two*. Translated by Helen Zimmern and Paul V. Cohn. New York: Dover Publications, 2006.

Persil, Jean. "Report to His Majesty the King by the Minister of Justice" (1836). In *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.

Rampa, T. Lobsang. *Doctor from Lhasa*. London: Corgi Books, 1965.

——. *The Cave of the Ancients*. London: Corgi Books, 1972.

——. *The Hermit*. London: Corgi Books, 1971.

——. *The Third Eye: The Autobiography of a Tibetan Lama*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1957.

——. *Tibetan Sage*. London: Corgi Books, 1980.

——. *Wisdom of the Ancients*. London: Corgi Books, 1966.

Riot, Philippe. "The Parallel Lives of Pierre Rivière" (1973). In *I, Pierre Rivière, having slaughtered my mother, my sister, and my brother…A Case of Parricide in the 19th Century*, edited by Michel Foucault. London: Random House, 1982.

Sachs, Wolfgang. *Planet Dialectics: Explorations in Environment and Development*. London: Zed Books, 1999.

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin, 1978.

"Satipatthāna Sutta." In *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya*, translated by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2005.

Schopenhauer, Arthur. *The World as Will and Idea*. Vol. 2. Translated by R. B. Haldane. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1964.

Shakabpa, Tsepon W. D. *Tibet: A Political History*. New York: Potala Publications, 1984.

Sharf, Robert H. "Sanbōkyōdan: Zen and the Way of the New Religions." *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 22/3–4 (1995): 417–458.

——. "The Zen of Japanese Nationalism." In *Curators of the Buddha: The Study of Buddhism under Colonialism*, edited by Donald S. Lopez, Jr. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Sivaraksa, Sulak. *Conflict, Culture, Change: Engaged Buddhism in a Globalizing World*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2005.

——. *Loyalty Demands Dissent: Autobiography of an Engaged Buddhist*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1998.

Thera, Nyanaponika, and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Introduction II to *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha: An Anthology of Suttas from the Anguttara Nikāya*, edited by Nyanaponika Thera and Bhikkhu Bodhi. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 1999.

Thurman, Robert A. F. *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.

——. *Inner Revolution: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Real Happiness*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1999.

——. *The Jewel Tree of Tibet: The Enlightenment Engine of Tibetan Buddhism*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Union Research Institute. *Tibet 1950–1967*. Hong Kong: Union Press Ltd., 1968.
Urban, Hugh B. *Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics, and Power in the Study of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
Van Greunen, Erika. "About the Author." In Nairn, Rob. *Diamond Mind: Psychology of Meditation*. Cape Town: Kairon Press, 1998.
Voyce, Malcolm. "The Vinaya and the Dharmasastra: Monastic Law and Legal Pluralism in Ancient India." *Journal of Legal Pluralism* 56 (2007): 33–65.
Walshe, Maurice. Introduction to *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*, translated by Maurice Walshe. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995.

INDEX